

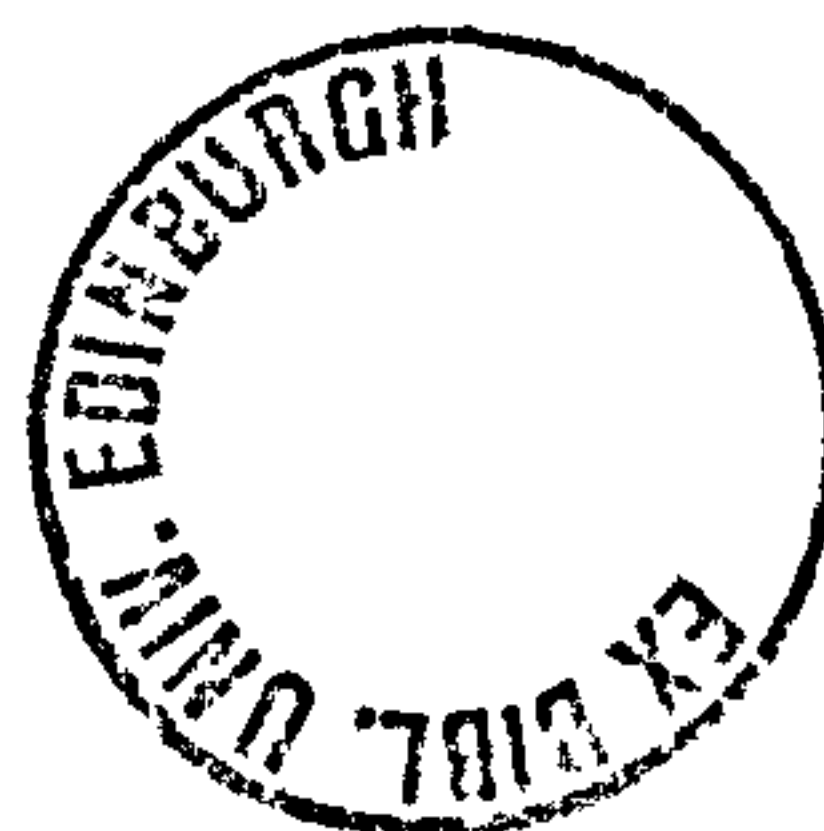
THE GERMAN HANSE AND ENGLAND : COMMERCIAL AND POLITICAL

INTERACTION AT THE CLOSE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

by

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John D. Fudge

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines economic and political interaction between England and the German Hanse in the second half of the fifteenth century, and assesses the extent to which realignment of Anglo-Hanseatic trade within the broader European commercial network affected the institutional stability of the Hanse and the mercantile development of its principal member towns. Delineation of the commercial infra-structure also allows for an evaluation of the Hanseatic trade in individual English ports and the economic repercussions of various interruptions in this trade.

The economic interests of merchant groups associated with changing commercial patterns and affected by the shifting currents of Anglo-Hanseatic diplomacy provide the basis for analysis of inter-urban political behaviour within the Hanse. A pervading element of disunity within the Hanseatic community was exposed by the diverse range of responses to the seizure of the Hanseatic salt fleet by English privateers in 1449, and especially by Lübeck's long-term alienation from the trade with England. Two decades later the spiralling cycle of maritime violence culminated with the complete breakdown in Anglo-Hanseatic diplomacy and an attempt by Cologne's merchants to dissociate themselves from the rest of the Hanseatic community in England. The resultant disruption of Anglo-Baltic trade during the next five years, coupled with Cologne's determination to preserve the cross-Channel trade with London, greatly enhanced the role of the Zealand ports for both the English and the Hanseatic seaborne trade, and helped pave the way for the ascendancy of the Brabantine fair towns during the final quarter of the century. As a natural corollary, the reliance of the Cologners on trade routes to the south and east, precipitated an expansion of the overland network that in turn had far-reaching consequences for various sectors of the Hanseatic community. Moreover, the interruption of Anglo-Hanseatic commerce in the 1470s and again in the late 1480s profoundly affected the overseas trade of ports in eastern England, although this did not in itself determine the extent of English participation in the Baltic trade over the long term. Finally, with Anglo-Hanseatic political relations stable by the end of the century, the Anglo-Lowland trade wars of the 1490s prompted further, albeit less permanent adjustments in the commercial network, again highlighting both the strengths and weaknesses of diverse Hanseatic interest groups and the overall vulnerability of the Hanse as a viable political entity.

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J.D.F.

## I INTRODUCTION

With few exceptions the interpretation of fifteenth century Hanseatic history has, to date, relied heavily on a historiographical tradition that emphasizes institutional development and decay and adheres to two essential premises. The first of these is that the German Hanse reached the pinnacle of its power as a medieval economic and political organization in the second half of the fourteenth century, when it dominated trade, transport and finance throughout much of Scandinavia and the northern German territories, and benefited from preferential commercial freedoms in several foreign lands, including England. Secondly, by the late fifteenth century the Hanseatic confederation was in the midst of an irreversible decline precipitated by the combined effects of civic and regional particularism within its membership and the emergence of nation states with trading communities capable of mercantile expansion.

While both of these conclusions are valid in the broadest sense, they nevertheless leave unanswered a range of related questions worthy of further investigation. Does the apparent deterioration of the German Hanse as a political institution in the late fifteenth century necessarily reflect a corresponding decline in the mercantile prosperity of its principal member towns? If the Hanse of 1450 was a formidable, albeit fading political entity, what had it become by the end of the century? How did diplomatic issues involving foreign trading partners interact with economic developments to affect political cohesion within the confederation?

Inasmuch as the Hanse was in the first instance a confederation of trading towns created to promote and protect the economic interests of its membership, many of the essential internal and external pressures which exhausted it are necessarily reflected in the course of

relations with England, at once a principal trading partner of the Hanse and a nation state whose denizen merchant community in the later fifteenth century at least had the potential for overseas expansion to greater international markets.

Delineation of the infra-structure of the Hanseatic trade generally, and then specifically the connections with England, has necessitated first of all an investigation of the low-value, bulk carriage trade that integrated England into the north-south traffic along the Atlantic seaboard from Hamburg to Iberia. Of particular importance in this sector were the Baltic skippers and their distributive trade in salt and bulk freight. This traffic holds an integral place in this study since iron, timber, flax, pitch, tar, cable and cordage formed the cornerstone of the export trade of the Hanse's Baltic towns and because there was a consistent demand for these products in England. A second essential facet of the trade structure, the traffic in higher-value low-bulk commodities, brings to light the central position of the Hanseatic comptoirs at London and Bruges, and the commercial and political realignment that took place as the ascendancy of the Brabantine fair towns expanded distributive networks for English cloth.

Numerous archival collections and published source compilations permit investigation of the political and economic relations of England and the Hanse in the late medieval period. In England the surviving records of various branches of the central administration, and especially those of the Chancery and Exchequer, are essential. Royal officials in each major port recorded the arrivals and departures of ships. Captains' names and sometimes home ports, as well as descriptions and values of cargoes, the names of cargo owners, and applicable tariffs were recorded in the particulars of accounts (PRO. E122 KR. Customs Accounts). Summaries of these particulars also were enrolled by the Exchequer



clerks in their annual tallies of revenues collected through royal customs and subsidies (PRO. E356 LTR. Customs Rolls). Even though there are many gaps in the surviving particulars, they offer, together with the enrolments, a wealth of detail regarding England's sea-borne trade. Yet since the publication in 1881 of G. Schanz's extensive compilation of statistics for English trade under the early Tudors the use of customs records, even as a quantitative source, has been extremely limited for the fifteenth century. Moreover, Schanz's overview of customs administration and his estimates of English exports in Englische Handelspolitik gegen Ende des Mittelalters, were based on the enrolments, and so provide little detail about merchants, ships, and imported commodities. Other commercial statistics for the fifteenth century up to 1482, and also derived from enrolled accounts, are appended to a collection of essays edited by M.M. Postan and E. Power first published in 1933 as Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century. And a third quantitative study, England's Export Trade 1275-1547, by E.M. Carus-Wilson and O. Coleman, collates both cloth and wool export totals but not those for any other sector of maritime commerce. Although the two more recent works are indeed very useful, a clearer delineation of the trade structure in the second half of the fifteenth century has necessarily entailed gleaning additional aggregate figures from post-1482 enrolments to be utilized in conjunction with the invaluable details provided by the more fragmentary particulars of accounts. These in turn are augmented by the voluminous records of the English Chancery, and especially the innumerable requests for royal writs (PRO. C1 Early Chancery Proceedings), which offer many excellent examples of litigation involving Hansards in England, though, unfortunately, few of the judgments that were handed down.

Archival research into the English connections of the northern Hanseatic towns, on the other hand, remains



complicated by problems of access to major source collections. The medieval archives of Reval (now known by its Estonian name Tallin) currently are kept at the West German federal archive in Koblenz, while some 30,000 medieval documents from Lübeck and Bremen that came into Soviet possession at the end of World War II are deposited primarily in archives in the German Democratic Republic. To date, efforts to negotiate the repatriation of these collections have been unsuccessful. Evidently a wealth of material relevant to Anglo-Hanseatic topics also survives in the archives at Gdansk (Danzig) and Torun (Thorn). Regrettably, though, without the explicit support of any academic institution or the co-operation of the Polish consulate in Toronto, a research visit to the Polish and East German archives has not been possible. I am especially indebted, therefore, to Dr. Ian Blanchard of the University of Edinburgh for arranging to obtain microfilms of the extant Danzig port books (WAPG. 300.19/1-10), which were vital to this study. Though not comparable to English customs particulars in terms of detail and completeness, the Danzig books nevertheless are an indispensable source for any investigation of the port's seaborne trade. Elsewhere, while the editors of the Hansisches Urkundenbuch published many documents from the manuscript collections at Cologne, still much of the Hanseatic material from that town's archives is not in print. Of the numerous pertinent collections, one of the most useful for this study has been the HA Köln Hanse III K 15 series: a collection of letters and all manner of undated miscellaneous documents from the second half of the fifteenth century relating to England and the London Steelyard, and constituting a major portion of the Steelyard archive for the period.

One of the earliest of all the Hanseatic source compilations also focused on the Hanseatic presence in London. Urkundliche Geschichte des hansischen Stahlhofes zu London, compiled by Hamburg archivist J.M. Lappenberg and published in 1851 remains an invaluable collection of

statutes and notarial records illustrating the development of the Hanseatic community there, together with Lappenberg's own narrative history of the Steelyard enclave, the cultural impact of the Hansards in England, and their "mächtigen Einfluss" on English mercantile development. Two other key source collections, the Hanserecesse and Hansisches Urkundenbuch, were largely complete prior to World War I. The Hanserecesse include extraordinarily complete records of Hanseatic assemblies, as well as related treaties, documents and letters that passed between Hanseatic towns, comptoirs, merchants, and foreign governments. The Hansisches Urkundenbuch series contains transcripts of letters, ordinances, and notarial miscellanea resurrected from archives across northern Europe, and is a principal source for much historical detail on a range of topics including piracy, diplomacy, commodities, credit, prices and litigation.

Three other German collections have been especially useful for this study. The Urkundenbuch der Stadt Lübeck consists of documents that passed between Lübeck civic authorities and various other national, territorial and town governments. A wealth of material relating to Cologne's trade history, much of it unpublished in the other collections, is included in Quellen zur Geschichte des Kölner Handels und Verkehrs im Mittelalter, edited by B. Kuske. Finally, of considerable value for the study of political and economic development in Teutonic Prussia and Danzig's role in Baltic commerce is Akten der Ständetage Preussens unter der Herrschaft des Deutschen Ordens, edited by M. Töppen. Complementing these documentary sources are a number of contemporary chronicles, the most useful of which are "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", included in Scriptores Rerum Preussicarum, edited by T. Hirsch et al., and "Die Chronik Christians von Geren" in Die Lübecker Bergenfahrer und ihre Chronistik, edited by F. Bruns.



Of the printed source compilations of material from English archives, the most relevant are contained in the 'Rolls Series'. In particular the Calendar of the Close Rolls and the Calendar of the Patent Rolls contain numerous references to Hansards and the Hanseatic towns, as do the Calendar of plea and Memoranda Rolls of the City of London and the Calendar of Letter Books of the City of London. Thomas Rymer's Foedera and the Rotuli Parliamentorum also shed light on political currents in England and how they affected Anglo-Hanseatic diplomacy. Of special interest too for mercantile concerns are the Acts of Court of the Mercers' Company 1453-1527.

The Lowlands, of course, provided a key element in the English and Hanseatic commercial networks, and there is no lack of written evidence attesting to their importance. Various summaries of the collectors of the ducal water tolls in Zealand and Brabant (ARA. CC. 22359-22362) are of some interest with regard to revenues, but thankfully most of the more complete accounts, with details of ships, merchants and cargoes, were edited and published in 1939 by W.S. Unger in De tol van Iersekerood. Many of the original manuscripts were subsequently lost when fire destroyed the Middelburg archives. At Antwerp the aldermens' registers (SAA. SR. 43-138) provide a partial inventory of transactions, contracts and debts at the Antwerp market. The sheer bulk of this collection has prohibited a comprehensive search of all the registers, and I am grateful to Dr. Asaert for his additional references to English and Hanseatic merchants. The Antwerp "Certificate Books" (SAA. Cert. 1-3) also are a mine of detail regarding commercial traffic to and from the Brabantine entrepot beginning in 1488. They are edited and calendared in R. Doehaerd's Etudes Anversoises. Various other printed compilations, the Bronnen collections edited by Unger, H.J. Smit and H.A. Poelman, round out the principal sources for the mercantile history of the Lowlands in the late medieval period with a range of

documents relating primarily though not exclusively to seaborne commerce.

As German historians attempted to mold a great maritime tradition from the history of the Hanse in the early years of this century, three important monographs appeared that dealt with Anglo-Hanseatic relations in the later Middle Ages. The studies by W. Stein, F. Schulz and K. Engel each offered some discussion of particularism within the Hanse, but nevertheless interpreted the Peace of Utrecht, which ended the war between England and the Hanse in 1474, as a clear victory for the Hansards. Only recently have the deficiencies of the Hanse's internal political structure and the effects thereon of international developments been examined in a different light. The most interesting analysis has been offered by W. Stark. The principal English contribution to Anglo-Hanseatic historiography is M.M. Postan's "The Economic and Political Relations of England and the Hanse from 1400 to 1475", published in Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century, and although it gives an excellent overview of the period, the author's interpretation of Anglo-Hanseatic disputes is derived largely from that of the earlier German works. But aside from an admittedly less comprehensive section in the English translation of P. Dollinger's general history of the Hanse, Postan's essay remains the only extensive treatment of fifteenth century Anglo-Hanseatic relations available in the English language.

Hence, although there can be little doubt that extraneous economic and political pressures contributed significantly to the institutional deterioration of the Hanse during the second half of the fifteenth century, investigation of the Hanse's relationship with England has been sporadic, and few studies have ventured to assess the fragmentation of the Hanseatic trading community in context with Anglo-Hanseatic affairs. The standard interpretation has been that the political quarrels

with the English somehow united the Hanse and helped prolong its existence. Moreover, to date, no attempt has been made to evaluate the economic implications of Anglo-Hanseatic diplomatic relations for the maritime trade of English ports where Hanseatic interests were concentrated.

The period under review spans the years 1450 through 1510, with lines of demarcation provided by two pivotal crises in Anglo-Hanseatic relations - the seizure of the Hanseatic salt fleet in 1449 and the general arrest of Hansards in England in 1468; and a third - the disruption of the Anglo-Lowland trade in the 1490s, in which the Hansards were unavoidably caught up, and which followed closely on the heels of the articulation of the Anglo-Hanseatic status quo in 1491. The chronological framework thus becomes divided into three principal sections, each encompassing approximately two decades, within which both the impact of the crises and their aftermaths can be identified by monitoring change in the structure of the trade and fitting domestic and international political developments into the economic framework. Through this an assessment is possible of Anglo-Hanseatic "relations", which in turn reflect both economic and political change within the German Hanse.

Out of this investigation also comes a clearer picture of the scope and character of the Hanseatic trade in individual English ports and the degree to which it was affected by the ebb and flow of diplomatic relations. Likewise, the English commercial presence in the Baltic region, another subject somewhat muddled by historiographical orthodoxy that is far too reliant on the recorded complaints of restrictions there, is clarified through detailed examination of English activity within the Anglo-Hanseatic network.

With regard to orthography and other usage, the German spelling of place-names has been followed except



for well-known Anglicized variations, such as Cologne, Prussia, Lithuania, etc. In many instances throughout the narrative British spellings of common words are given, although for the most part the English spelling conforms to current North American usage, as found in Funk and Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary : Canadian Edition. Also, for the purpose of this study the convenient term "Esterling" is used to distinguish the Hansards of the North Sea ports and the Baltic territories from those of Cologne and the lower Rhineland. Though not overly precise, this general definition is indeed common in contemporary English documents of the mid-fifteenth century, though less so by the early sixteenth. Finally, all monetary sums are given in English pounds sterling unless otherwise noted.

## II DIVERSE DEPREDATIONS : THE ANGLO-HANSEATIC CONTROVERSY 1400-1449<sup>1</sup>

During the course of the fifteenth century the Prussian staple at Danzig emerged as the leading port of trade in the eastern Baltic, and was the foremost supplier of cereals and forest products to western Europe. Distant markets in England and the Lowlands were of central importance to Danzig's export trade. But foreign contact with the Prussian hinterland, the source of supply for many of the exportable raw products, was actively discouraged by the town's merchant community and by successive Grand Masters of the Teutonic Order, in practice the sovereign rulers of Prussia and Livonia, with supreme control over all the major trading ports of the eastern Baltic. The only significant English import in this region was woollen cloth, and almost all of that which came to Prussia was destined for the interior, where again the regional markets were jealously monopolized by agents of the Order and intermediaries from Danzig. Although much of it arrived via the short sea route to the continent, from where it was transported overland to Lübeck and thence to Danzig, the direct sea route via the Danish Sound was also well established. For the westward shipment of Danzig's bulky export cargoes this Umlandfahrt was usually more practical. Often partners in this bulk carriage trade to England and especially to the Lowlands were the merchants of Lübeck. They also were major distributors of woollens in the

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<sup>1</sup> Unless specifically indicated, references to England and the Hanse are based on E. Daenell, Die Blütezeit der deutschen Hanse. (Berlin/New York, 1973); K. Engel, "Die Organisation der deutsch-hansischen Kaufleute in England im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert", HGbl., XIX (1913), 445-517, XX (1914), 173-225; M.M. Postan, "The Economic and Political Relations of England and the Hanse from 1400 to 1475", Studies, 91-153; W. Stein, "Die Hanse und England beim Ausgang des hundertjährigen Krieges", HGbl., XLVI (1921), 27-126, and Die Hanse und England : Ein hansisch-englischer Seekrieg im 15. Jahrhundert. Pfingstblätter des hansischen Geschichtsvereins I, 1905.

Baltic region, and therefore any direct importation of cloth by foreigners would constitute a threat to another established monopoly.<sup>2</sup>

Hence, in addition to Danzig and the other eastern ports, Lübeck and her Wendish neighbours - Stralsund, Wismar and Rostock, also favoured some restriction of the trade of Englishmen and Hollanders in the Baltic. Their motives varied superficially according to the character and commodity structure of the trade in each geographical area, but did not differ in any fundamental sense. Both Lübeck's attitude and that of Danzig were dictated by a spirit of self-interest tied to the preservation of specific regional and civic merchant communities.

Holland's challenge to Hanseatic domination of the northern European economy often paralleled that of England, and a brief overview of this sometimes violent struggle establishes a broader historical context for Anglo-Hanseatic issues. Hansards in the Baltic ports often employed carriers from the Lowlands for the transport of wood and grain to the Atlantic seaboard, and ordinances intended to limit the participation of Holland's merchants and shippers in direct trade were not always effective. In 1422 they were prohibited from residing in Prussia, and the following year were forbidden to trade to Livonia, where the merchants of Reval, Riga and Dorpat had supplanted those of Lübeck and Visby as the Hanseatic intermediaries for the trade to Novgorod and Russia.<sup>3</sup>

The restrictions accomplished little, but did lead to a sustained campaign of obstruction and piracy by the

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<sup>2</sup> W. Stark, Lübeck und Danzig in der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts. Abhandlungen zur Handels- und Sozialgeschichte XI, (Weimar, 1973), 41-44; HUB. IX no. 39.

<sup>3</sup> K. Fritze, Am Wendepunkt der Hanse. (Berlin, 1967), 55-56; HR. (I) VII no. 397, 609#23, 800#1, VIII no. 4, 26; HUB. VI no. 489; Akten. I no. 302.



Hollanders, who, although ostensibly neutral, were highly sympathetic toward the Danes when Denmark and the Hanse were at war from 1426 to 1435.<sup>4</sup> Although ships from Holland were attacked during the hostilities, the Hollanders persisted in running the Wendish blockade of the Baltic. Recognizing the futility of the situation, the Order granted the merchants of Holland, Zealand and England access to Prussia in 1427.<sup>5</sup> While the Wendish ports advocated the expulsion of foreigners, the Grand Master attempted instead to restrict the trading activity of his guests once they had entered Prussian territory. To their advantage, Lübeck and the Wendish towns did succeed in diverting much of northern Europe's commerce to the old overland and coastal routes, but Prussia's seemingly irresolute attitude toward the incursion of the English and the Hollanders negated the possibility of a totally effective Hanseatic blockade of the Sound.

Another political development which affected the Hanse was the consolidation of the Lowland territories by the dukes of Burgundy in the first quarter of the century. Thereafter it was increasingly difficult for the Hanse to impose economic policies on small and politically vulnerable duchies and counties, and play one off against another. Holland, Zealand and Brabant were added to the Burgundian possessions between 1430 and 1433, after which the continuing quarrels with the Hansards brought the Hanse into contact with the relatively strong and centralized authority of Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, already frequently annoyed by litigations involving Hansards at the Flemish staple of Bruges.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> K. Fritze, op. cit., 70.

<sup>5</sup> Akten. I no. 378.

<sup>6</sup> K. Fritze, op. cit., 50-51; P. Dollinger, The German Hansa, transl. D. Ault and S.H. Steinberg, (London, 1970), 283-84, 298-300.

A fierce rivalry developed between Holland's expanding mercantile sector and its Hanseatic counterpart. Finally, the activity of pirates from Holland led the Hanseatic diet, the Hansetag, at Lübeck to suspend commerce with the Hollanders in 1436.<sup>7</sup> Again this severe restriction was rejected by the eastern Baltic towns, but antagonism in the west eventually culminated in a state of war between Holland and the Wendish towns from 1438 to 1441.

Meanwhile, the question of reciprocal trading privileges for English merchants in Prussia and Livonia also had emerged as a contentious issue in Hanseatic affairs. Hansards had long enjoyed a privileged status in England. They formed a firmly established corporate body in London with rights of jurisdiction over members at their "Steelyard" enclave, and through a series of charters, including Edward I's Carta Mercatoria, benefited from various customs exemptions.<sup>8</sup> Yet, although English merchants frequently complained of arrest and harassment in the Wendish ports,<sup>9</sup> by the late fourteenth century they too were well established at Königsberg, Elbing and Danzig, engaging in wholesale and retail trade with other foreigners as well as Prussians. They were especially active as money-lenders, and in Danzig had formed a

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<sup>7</sup> K. Fritze, op. cit., 71; HR. (2) II no. 11, 94, 146. Also F. Vollbehr, Die Holländer und die deutsche Hanse. Pfingstblätter des hansischen Geschichtsvereins XXI (1930), 26-46, and K. Spading, "Zu den Ursachen für das Eindringen der Holländer in das hansische Zwischenhandelsmonopol im 15. Jahrhundert", Neue Hansische Studien, ed. K. Fritze, et al., (Berlin, 1970), 227-42.

<sup>8</sup> HUB. II no. 31#10; R. Hakluyt, ed., Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation. (Glasgow, 1903), I 112-17.

<sup>9</sup> In 1388 merchants from Lynn, Yarmouth, Norwich, Boston, Hull and London complained that men of the Wendish towns had arrested their servants and merchandise. However, subsequent arrests in England were not confined to traders from the Wendish sector. Several of those detained were from Cologne and Dortmund. All were released after promising that Englishmen would not be harassed in the Wendish towns. CPMR. 1381-1412. 143-44, 149-50. A similar situation arose again in 1397. CPR. 1396-1399. 309-10.



society with an elected governor.<sup>10</sup> This organization seems to have been tolerated until the turn of the century, when Hanseatic Englandfahrer objected to changes in English customs regulations. The Prussian ports responded by prohibiting Englishmen from trading with non-Hansards and restricting their rights of residence, before eventually expelling them outright in 1403.<sup>11</sup> English attacks on Hanseatic shipping were so numerous in the ensuing two years that the Hanse attempted a trade boycott in retaliation. Its effectiveness again was severely hampered by a lack of co-operation within the trading confederation, and because the Hansards really could do little to hinder the marketing of English cloth in Brabant and Holland.<sup>12</sup>

In 1405 the king's ambassadors to Prussia and envoys of the Grand Master agreed:

...all liege marchants of England whatsoever shall have free licence and libertie to arrive with their shippes, goods and merchandises whatsoever, at any Porte of the land of Prussia and also the said goods and merchandises farther unto any place of the sayd land of Prussia to transport, and there with any person or persons freely to contract and bargaine, even as heretofore, and from auncient times it hath bene accustomed. Which liberty in all respects is granted unto the Prussians in England.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> T. Hirsch, Danzigs Handels-und Gewerbsgeschichte unter der Herrschaft des Deutschen Ordens. (Stuttgart, 1969), 99-101; F. Schulz, Die Hanse und England von Eduards III. bis auf Heinrichs VIII. Zeit. (Berlin, 1911), 49-50; K-H. Ruffmann, "Engländer und Schotten in den Seestädten Ost-und Westpreussens", Zeitschrift für Ostforschung, VII (1958), 12; HR. (1) III no. 403#4, IV no. 5, 397#8, 537#2-6, V no. 100#4, 101#2-3; HUB. IV no. 928, 1042.

<sup>11</sup> F. Schulz, op. cit., 50-51; HUB. IV no. 1054, V no. 617, 629, 651; HR. (1) V no. 198#3-6, 203#5-9.

<sup>12</sup> HR. (1) V no. 130, 209#3-6, 211, 212, 225#3-5; HUB. V no. 603, 613, 615, 618, 620, 621, 633, 634; CPR. 1401-1405. 424, 432, 433, 508, 509; CPR. 1405-1408. 59, 60; Akten. I no. 65, 70.

<sup>13</sup> R. Hakluyt, op. cit., 140, and CPR. 1405-1408. 153. J.L. Kirby reviews this (Footnote Continued)

A number of east and south coast merchants were ordered to make restitution for illegal distraint of Hanseatic ships and cargoes. A commission was appointed to hear disputes involving merchants of the Hanse, Prussia and Holland. But the "divers depredations of goods and merchandise and other damages" perpetrated on and by the Hansards and Hollanders continued, rendering precarious the situation of English traders who returned to the Baltic ports.<sup>14</sup> Unlike their Hanseatic counterparts in England, they did not benefit from fiscal exemptions, and without permission to form a corporate body with elected officials, they remained subject to the jurisdiction of the Order and the Prussian municipalities.

Although another similar accord was agreed to in 1409, it did little to moderate the enmity of the two factions, and piracy and commercial reprisals continued unabated.<sup>15</sup> The next decade saw no end of claims and countercharges. Merchants of the Hanseatic comptoir at Bergen in Norway were accused of the robbery and murder of English traders and fishermen, while Hansards in London complained of tolls contrary to the composition of their charters in England.<sup>16</sup>

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(Footnote Continued)

episode in Anglo-Prussian diplomacy in "Sir William Sturmy's Embassy to Germany in 1405-06", History Today, XV (1965), 39-47.

<sup>14</sup> The commission to hear disputes involving Hansards was appointed in summer 1406. CPR. 1405-1408. 234. Merchants in Hull and Lynn were ordered arrested, Ibid., 230, 232, 236, and restitution ordered for the robbery of ships from Lübeck and Greifswald. Ibid., 302, 305. Within a year, however, merchants from the east coast ports were being sought in connection with the capture of a ship from Hamburg. Ibid., 352-53.

<sup>15</sup> R. Hakluyt, op. cit., 163-70; HR. (1) VI no. 76, 399#7, 451, 556, 581, 582, VII no. 592#7-10; HUB. VI no. 371, 418, 447, 635, 678, 689, 789, 934, 942, 964, CPMR. 1413-1437. 70-71; CPR. 1413-1416. 65.

<sup>16</sup> HUB. V no. 756, 1012; CPR. 1408-1413. 383-85; CLB. (1) 1400-1422. 95-96, 198; Foedera. VIII 700-01, 722-25, IX 325-26.



Several Englishmen did, however, return to the Baltic ports; their transactions with hinterland markets soon drawing the ire of rival Hanseatic merchants. At least fifty-five English traders were established in Danzig when renewed persecution curtailed their commercial activity severely in 1422. New decrees limited the length of their stay in Prussian territory, and together with all other non-Hanseatic guests they were denied direct trade with the interior.<sup>17</sup> This further provoked England's mercantile sector, which, enjoying solid representation in the Commons, lobbied to curtail the privileges of foreign merchants during the 1420s.<sup>18</sup> Conversely, the war between Holland and the Wendish towns afforded the latter an opportunity to stifle English trade to the Baltic, and that of the Hollanders, by blockading the Sound. But frequent attacks on English shipping only led to renewed tension,<sup>19</sup> and while privateers from Holland, England and the Wendish towns clashed on the high seas, the pleas heard at Westminster and Danzig became as predictable as they were frequent. Hansards complained that sheriffs in London were "anew troubling and distraining" them, and sued for discharge from customs dues. In Prussia, delegations of English traders repeatedly appeared at the court of the Grand Master to seek parity, complain of depredations, and request permission to continue to elect aldermen and occupy a common house. By ruling that English merchants "sullen alle recht und gewonheid als ander geste hrye in lande haben", the Order

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<sup>17</sup> K-H. Ruffmann, op. cit., 22-23; Akten. I no. 302.

<sup>18</sup> J.S. Roskell, The Commons and their Speakers in English Parliaments 1376-1523. (Manchester, 1965), 183, 186, and The Commons in the Parliament of 1422. (Manchester, 1954), 51-53, 125-29; HR. (I) VII no. 504, 517, 529; Rot. Parl. IV 193, 348, V 65.

<sup>19</sup> Rot. Parl. V 348, 403; HR. (I) VIII no. 452.

carefully reaffirmed the status quo in Prussian territory.<sup>20</sup>

There may well have been some justification for demanding reprisals against Hansards in order to emphasize the struggle for parity, but the English government could not afford to overlook entirely the Hanseatic contribution to the Realm's mercantile prosperity. A proclamation made in all major English ports in March 1430 called for a halt to the harassment of Hansards and their ships because:

...by reason of the arrest in England of certain citizens and merchants of Hamburg and of their goods, merchants not only of Hamburg but others in the parts of the said Hanse have since abstained from coming to the realm as they used to do, fearing that hindrance or arrest might be laid upon them, and the king's will is that their suspicion be removed.....<sup>21</sup>

While this indicated some official concern for the state of Anglo-Hanseatic relations, subsequent developments reflected the futility of such an attempt to curb maritime violence. Proclamations did not necessarily constitute effective law, and did not guarantee redress.

Despite intermittent negotiations,<sup>22</sup> piracy flourished and complaints multiplied. When the Wendish towns did not reply to letters requesting restitution for the capture of a large ship from Boston in 1432 the king and his council, at the urging of the Commons, authorized the arrest of ships belonging to the merchants of Lübeck, Rostock, Hamburg and Wismar. Hansards in England also

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<sup>20</sup> CCR. 1422-1429. 49-50, 53, 140, 192, 257, 311; Rot. Parl. IV 192; Akten. I no. 385, 387, 484. But apparently the English merchants in Danzig still had "Olderlude" there in 1431. T. Hirsch, op. cit., 106.

<sup>21</sup> CCR. 1429-1435. 55.

<sup>22</sup> Rot. Parl. IV 493; Foedera. X 605, 627-28.

objected to paying new tunnage and poundage dues, and so by the mid-1430s Anglo-Hanseatic relations had degenerated to the point of impasse.<sup>23</sup>

England's political difficulties on the continent also increased. The Burgundians imposed an embargo on English cloth and wool in June 1434, and the following year the Hansards instituted their own boycott of English merchandise.<sup>24</sup> France and Burgundy were reconciled with the Treaty of Arras, and with markets in Flanders and Brabant closed to English exports, the wool and cloth trade, on which England's national finances depended, was in jeopardy. This necessitated a revival of interest in somewhat more cordial dealings with the Hanse. Serious bargaining ensued, and in 1437 England and representatives from the major Hanseatic towns and the Teutonic Order agreed on a general principle of reciprocity.<sup>25</sup> No new taxes were to be imposed on English merchants in the Hanseatic towns, and the Hanseatic privileges in England, including exemptions from increased customs and subsidies, were reaffirmed.

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<sup>23</sup> HR. (2) I no. 50; HUB. VI no. 1011; Select Cases in the Exchequer Chamber 1377-1461. ed. M. Hemmant, Publications of the Selden Society LI (1933), 27.

<sup>24</sup> HUB. VII no. 44; G. Schanz, Englische Handelspolitik gegen Ende des Mittelalters. (Leipzig, 1881), II no. 171; HR. (2) I no. 321#1-6; M.R. Thielemans, Bourgoigne et Angleterre : relations politiques et économiques entre les Pays-Bas Bourguignons et l'Angleterre, 1435-1467. (Brussel, 1966), 437. Flemish markets were not reopened to the English until 1439, Ibid., 133, and those in Holland and Zealand by treaty in 1445. H.J. Smit, Bronnen. (1) II no. 1288, 1296, 1298.

<sup>25</sup> HR. (2) II no. 16-90; Urkundliche Geschichte des hansischen Stahlhofes zu London. ed. J.M. Lappenberg, (Osnabrück, 1967), 57; H. Buszello, "Die auswärtige Handelspolitik der englischen Krone im 15. Jahrhundert", Frühformen englisch-deutscher Handelspartnerschaft. ed. K. Friedland, (Köln Wien, 1976), 71-73; English Historical Documents. ed. A.R. Myers, (London, 1969), IV 1035-36; Foedera. X 666-70; CPR. 1436-1441. 62; J. Ferguson, English Diplomacy 1442-1461. (Oxford, 1972), 96. Some economic repercussions of the conflict between England and Burgundy are reviewed in N.J.M. Kerling, Commercial Relations of Holland and Zealand with England from the late 15th Century to the close of the Middle Ages. (Leiden, 1954), 48-52.



The events of the mid-1430s were crucial to the long-term deterioration of Anglo-Hanseatic relations. While shifting allegiances on the continent temporarily eliminated the Lowland markets, and dealt England's military ambitions in northern France a serious blow, the accord with the Hanse secured the other principal continental market for English cloth. But the agreement, by which England appeared at last to have gained parity for English merchants in Prussia, eventually proved vague enough to be of little consequence. Danzig was reluctant to ratify it, and did not recognize it as binding, except insofar as Englishmen were still subject to existing taxes and regulations there.<sup>26</sup> Danzig's attitude notwithstanding, the English government itself established a precedent for the keeping of the seas during the 1430s which quickly nullified the concessions it had so long sought to achieve, and pushed the kingdom a step closer to open conflict with the Hanse. Piracy had played a significant role in Anglo-Hanseatic politics up to 1430, but in the middle decades of the century it came to displace England's clamour for parity in the Baltic as the dominant issue.

By 1436, when the English had lost their Burgundian ally, control of the Channel was uncertain and the continental foothold, Calais, was not entirely secure. The wartime navy that Henry V had established in 1416 to ensure a successful defence of his French possessions had become an expensive liability for his son, and between 1423 and 1430 the fleet of about thirty ships had been sold to pay royal debts.<sup>27</sup> As it had in the past, the government then relied on private individuals to keep the

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<sup>26</sup> T. Hirsch, op. cit., 113-14; Akten. II no. 40.

<sup>27</sup> C.F. Richmond, "The keeping of the Seas during the Hundred Years War 1422-1440", History, XLIX (1964), 285-90, and Royal Administration and the keeping of the Seas in the fifteenth Century, 1422-1485, unpublished PhD. thesis, (Oxford, 1963), 31-66.

sea. But indented captains and crews were expensive and not entirely effective. Hence, in 1436 licences were issued to merchants and shipowners to "resist the king's enemies on the sea" at their own expense.<sup>28</sup> Captured "enemy" ships and cargoes became property of the licencees. This mercenary legislation, coupled with the suspension of statutes which made violations of safe-conducts at sea and receipt of pirated goods treasonable offences, only aggravated the already volatile situation with the Hanse. Encouraged by this new freedom, shipowners petitioned for and received licences in London and various other ports of call for foreign shipping, including Hull, Ipswich and Lynn.<sup>29</sup> Eventually about thirty ships were active off the coasts of Flanders and France. The official recognition of the profit motive in sea keeping was tantamount to licencing piracy on the high seas.

In attempting to govern a nation economically drained by a century of intermittent war with France, and further weakened by the in-fighting of a self-seeking aristocracy not easily amenable to law, the Crown frequently was unwilling or unable to police the activity of the sea-faring population. Preoccupation with the wars in France resulted in more neglect of the problems of lawlessness and disorder. Even Henry V's fleet had been used primarily for the transport of troops rather than for any concerted campaign against pirates. Under young Henry VI, who held virtually no control over the aristocracy, perversion of the law by those who enjoyed the favour of the ruling council increased. In England's harbour towns there was no shortage of individuals

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., and CPR, 1429-1436. 509, 608-09.

<sup>29</sup> CCR, 1429-1436. 509, 510, 512, 515, 603. A summary of the relevant statutes is contained in Documents relating to Law and Custom of the Sea, ed. R.G. Marsden, Publications of the Navy Records Society XLIX (1915), 115-18.

willing to receive stolen goods, and law of the sea was meaningless to influential offenders who routinely threatened plaintiffs, paid off government officials, and bribed juries. Anarchy on the high seas could flourish because there was no central government in England strong enough to stop it.<sup>30</sup>

Licences were granted infrequently after 1436, and in 1442 the Commons pressed for, and succeeded in establishing a small fleet of privateers to keep the sea, but the illegal captures of ships from the Lowlands and the Hanse towns continued with striking regularity.<sup>31</sup> Although it was but one of the numerous instances of disregard for authority, the seizure of the Prussian vessel, 'la Isabell' of Danzig, perhaps best exemplified the irreverent mood of England's merchant and shipowning community by 1440. The ship was boarded while at anchor in Plymouth harbour. Ruffians forced the captain from his ship, the crew under "les hacches", and carried away a cargo belonging for the most part to Flemish merchants.<sup>32</sup>

The Commons ushered in the 1440s with new restrictions against foreigners, which further reflected the temperament of the merchant community, and its influence in political affairs. The king was granted a subsidy in 1440 only on the condition that foreign merchants be subjected to a new poll tax.<sup>33</sup> The Hansards maintained a

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<sup>30</sup> C.F. Richmond, "The keeping of the Seas during the Hundred Years War 1422-1440", op. cit., 295; C.L. Kingsford, Prejudice and Promise in Fifteenth Century England. (London, 1962), 77-78.

<sup>31</sup> CPR. 1436-1441. 64, 85, 86, 90, 202, 270, 408, 480; English Historical Documents. ed. A.R. Myers, (London, 1969), IV 446-47.

<sup>32</sup> CPR. 1436-1441. 409.

<sup>33</sup> CCR. 1435-1441. 310-12; J.S. Roskell, The Commons and their Speakers in English Parliaments 1376-1523. (Manchester, 1965), 220.



privileged status in England, and this enabled their enemies in parliament to mobilize the biases of an expanding merchant class, and channel anti-foreign sentiment into an anti-Hanse campaign. The already familiar requests for parity became more common, and in the Baltic ports of Stettin and Danzig Englishmen complained of "uncertain taxes and tribute", extortion, robbery and imprisonment. "We marvel at the complaints of the merchants..., which repeatedly assault our ears about the oppressions, injuries and hurts inflicted on them..." lamented the English sovereign in his protest to Lübeck, and again in 1442 the Commons moved to revoke Hanseatic privileges in England if the situation in Prussia were not soon remedied.<sup>34</sup> In truth, however, the manipulation of economic policy in England showed little sincere concern for English traders in the Baltic. The three-year war between Holland and the Wendish towns had not deterred the rapid re-establishment and growth of English trade in the region, despite Lübeck's attempt to blockade the Sound. Complaints by Danzig merchants at the turn of the decade indicate that in spite of restrictions Englishmen in that town were trading openly with non-Hansards and keeping their warehouses open all day to the alleged detriment of local businessmen.<sup>35</sup>

When the Wendish dispute with Holland ended with the Peace of Copenhagen in 1441, ships from Holland, Zealand and England returned to the Baltic in increasing numbers. The Wendish towns had failed to stem the tide against maritime interlopers from the west, and could do little to deter the fate of the Hanse's erstwhile predominance in the Baltic trade. But the English interpretation of

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<sup>34</sup> HR. (2) II no. 318, 346, 380, 539, 644; English Historical Documents. ed. A.R. Myers, (London, 1969), IV 1036-37; Rot. Parl. V 64-65; Akten. II no. 318; Foedera. X 753-55.

<sup>35</sup> Akten. II no. 87, 332, 370.

reciprocity kept the situation unsettled, and provided a rationale for the proposed revocation of Hanseatic franchises in England and piratical attacks on Hanseatic shipping. Indeed, after parliament succeeded in having the king formally demand that the Prussians adhere to the terms of the 1437 treaty, the English government did not make itself available for discussion until after the ultimatum had lapsed. So, by 1447, when litigation involving Hansards and Colchester merchants again resulted in wholesale arrests in England, the Hansards apparently stood on the brink of forfeiting all their immunities there.<sup>36</sup>

A Hansetag at Lübeck reacted to the maltreatment and arrest of Hansards in England by hastily recommending the immediate apprehension of Englishmen in Hanseatic territory. The Order and the Prussian towns declined to comply, preferring instead to have their own representatives clarify the situation in England before taking action.<sup>37</sup> To the English the lack of consensus within the Hanse must have been clearly evident, but the political leverage achieved with the threatened cancellation of Hanseatic charters in England soon was nullified by another Burgundian boycott and the resumption of war with France.<sup>38</sup> Again faced with possible economic isolation, England dispatched envoys to the diet at Lübeck in 1449, and resumed negotiations with Hanseatic officials.<sup>39</sup> However, in May of that year the most astounding

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<sup>36</sup> HR. (2) III no. 283, 286-89, 294-94, 316-18. Also F. Schulz, op. cit., 89.

<sup>37</sup> Akten. II no. 11, 13-18.

<sup>38</sup> In January 1447 the Burgundians again banned English cloth and wool in Burgundian territory. H.J. Smit, Bronnen. (1) II no. 1311; G. Schanz, op. cit., I 144. In addition, in the spring of 1449 the Danes closed the Sound to English shipping in retaliation for English violations of trade restrictions in Iceland. A truce was agreed to in July 1449, but when it lapsed in 1451 it was not renewed.

<sup>39</sup> HR. (2) III no. 503-05; LUB. VIII no. 334, 411; Akten. III no. 51.

privateering feat to date eliminated any possibility for agreement. At sea under official sanction, English freebooters commanded by Robert Wenynghon captured the combined salt fleet of the Lowlands and the Hanse as it returned from Bourgneuf. With "all the cheff schyppys of Duchelond, Holond, Selond, and Flaundrys" in his custody at the Isle of Wight, Wenynghon ventured to suggest that the time had come "to trete for a fynell pese as for that partyes". But the sixty ships of Holland, Zealand and Flanders were soon released, while the Hanseatic vessels, including sixteen from Lübeck, were auctioned.<sup>40</sup> The Anglo-Hanseatic controversy escalated accordingly.

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<sup>40</sup> A.R. Bridbury, England and the Salt Trade in the later Middle Ages. (Oxford, 1955), 90-91; A. Agats, Der hansische Baienhandel. (Heidelberg, 1904), 76-78; HR. (2) III no. 196; C.F. Richmond, Royal Administration. 193-97. Wenynghon was a merchant and shipowner at Dartmouth who had been pardoned for piracy and murder in 1445-46, and was indented to serve in the keeping of the sea in April 1449. CPR. 1446-1452. 270; J. Wedgwood, ed., History of Parliament. vol. I, Biographies of the Members of the House of Commons 1439-1509, (London, 1936), 934. He was mayor of Dartmouth, 1447-48, and a member of parliament, 1449-50. In 1452 he was pardoned for the attack on the salt fleet, and he was mayor of Dartmouth again in 1456-57. For his own report of the capture see "Robert Wenynghon to Thomas Daniel - 25 May 1449" in J. Gairdner, ed., The Paston Letters. (Edinburgh, 1910), I 84-86. Coincidentally, minutes of the Council for 19th March 1447 note a three-year safeguard to Hansards "so that they not be vexed by vertue of any letter of marque graunted or to be graunted....." Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council. ed. N.H. Nicolas, (London, 1837), VI 61.



### III PIRACY AND PERFIDITY : ANGLO-HANSEATIC ISSUES AND POLITICAL ALIGNMENT WITHIN THE HANSE 1450-1468

#### Political relations between England and the Hanse

It would be difficult to find a more important or representative reflection of the Anglo-Hanseatic controversy in the mid-fifteenth century than the seizure of the Bay fleet in 1449. It was a pivotal incident in the course of relations between the Hanse and England, broadening the dimensions of the existing conflict, and remaining a source of bitter enmity for two decades. The response of the Hanseatic membership, moreover, came to reflect the fundamental contradictions which characterized internal Hanseatic politics throughout the second half of the century. From this point onward relations with England consistently accentuated commercial and political alignment within the German Hanse.

In light of Robert Wenynghton's nonchalance, and the probability that some royal councillors profited from his initiative, it is not inconceivable that the attack was condoned, if not actually instigated by members of the government.<sup>1</sup> Wenynghton was pardoned in 1452. But in presuming that this latest episode in maritime gangsterism might force concessions from the Hansards, the English captain and his cohorts seriously misjudged the temperament of those affected by the capture. Esterling merchants from the Wendish towns and Prussia incurred the heaviest losses, with Lübeckers claiming £18,000 in damages. But unlike Danzig, Lübeck was not able to compensate merchants by confiscating English ships or

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<sup>1</sup> J. Ferguson, op. cit., 101; HR. (2) III no. 638, 647, 669-70. C.F. Richmond has refuted the notion that the English government instigated the attack, but has suggested that some members of the Council did profit by it. C.F. Richmond, Royal Administration, 197-202. See also M.R. Thielemans, op. cit., 337.

goods in the Baltic.<sup>3</sup> As a consequence, the town's resistance to any compromise with England immediately intensified, further contributing to the deterioration of Anglo-Hanseatic diplomacy. In addition to the reprisals in Danzig, English traders in the Lowlands were arrested, and the Burgundians extracted monetary compensation from the English government.<sup>3</sup>

In 1450 representatives from the eastern Baltic towns of Danzig, Elbing, Königsberg, Thorn and Kulm were not present at the Hanseatic diet in Bremen at which Lübeck attempted to align other member towns in support of compensation claims against England.<sup>4</sup> The Prussian towns and also Cologne clearly were unwilling to sacrifice their lucrative English trade for a dispute between England and the Wendish towns. In a prelude to what was to follow in the 1460s, Cologne's envoys in Flanders hastened to clarify the town's status vis à vis England with English officials.<sup>5</sup>

Frustration in Lübeck peaked in the summer of 1450, when the English Crown presumed to "negotiate" a settlement of differences with the Baltic towns. An official English delegation headed by master Thomas Kent and London merchant John Stocker was intercepted at sea by the Wendish Bergenfahrer, taken to Lübeck, and there placed under house arrest.<sup>6</sup> This undoubtedly was

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<sup>3</sup> HR. (2) III no. 536, 555#2; HUB. VIII no. 84, 215. English merchants were arrested and held in Danzig. HR. (2) III no. 571-73.

<sup>3</sup> C.F. Richmond, Royal Administration. 119, 202; Foedera. XI 235-36.

<sup>4</sup> Akten. III no. 73; HR. (2) III no. 563, 570, 607.

<sup>5</sup> HR. (2) III no. 567.

<sup>6</sup> For the English deputation : Calendar of French Rolls - Henry VI: 48th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, appendix 2. (London, 1887), 383-84, Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council. ed. N.H. Nicolas, (London, 1837), VI (Footnote Continued)

something of an affront to Danzig and the Grand Master, who had not objected to treating with the English, and again must have called into question the concept of a firma confederatio. On the other hand, the Grand Master's expressed willingness to receive the English envoys had raised the possibility of an Anglo-Prussian compromise, and therefore had challenged Lübeck's leadership of the Hanse. At any rate, when news of this outrage reached England Hansards and their goods were arrested, and worst affected were the Prussians and Cologners.<sup>7</sup> Thomas Kent's subsequent flight from Lübeck in the spring of 1451 aggravated the volatile situation still further, sowing the seed of mistrust, and rendering prospects for an immediate accord most unlikely.<sup>8</sup>

Nevertheless, Lübeck's claims against England headed the agenda of a diet convened at Utrecht in May 1451, and English customs officials in the major ports were instructed to make proclamation:

...forbidding any person on pain of forfeiture and imprisonment to inflict any

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(Footnote Continued)

69, 76; Foedera, XI 241; CCR, 1447-1454, 227-28; CPR, 1446-1452, 330; HR, (2) III no. 561, 593#4, 594#2-3, 604, 608; PRO, E364/86. It was financed by a loan of £400 from English merchants, CCR, 1447-1454, 148, and was captured on 25th July 1450. "Die Ratschronik von 1438-1482", Die Chroniken der Niedersächsischen Städte: Lübeck, ed. F. Bruns, (Leipzig, 1910), IV 107-10.

<sup>7</sup> Akten, III no. 75; HR, (2) III no. 647, 654, 666, 667. In early September 1450 bailiffs in Lynn, London, Ipswich and Colchester were instructed to arrest Hansards and their goods. CPR, 1446-1452, 330-32. By November the Hansards had been released on a promise not to leave England, HR, (2) III no. 669-70. Lübeckers, however, were again or still in custody in 1453. CPR, 1452-1461, 123. Merchants from Wismar, Stralsund and Braunschweig, granted safe-conducts to visit England in 1453, were arrested as Lübeckers upon their arrival in Lynn on grounds that men from Lübeck were still in possession of property belonging to the English envoys. PRO, C76/135 m.5; CPR, 1452-1461, 119. As late as 1454 Baltic Hansards were denied the usual Hanseatic exemptions from various customs and subsidies. HR, (2) III no. 670, IV no. 7, 235-36.

<sup>8</sup> Stocker was allowed to leave Lübeck on 17th March 1451 to arrange talks between English and Hanseatic representatives at Utrecht, and Kent apparently was to stay in Lübeck as a guarantee that he would do so. Both men were in Utrecht by 26th May. HUB, VII no. 40; LUB, IX no. 11; HR, (2) III no. 702, 709#8ff. The behavior of "truwelos" Kent and Stocker profoundly offended and embittered the Lübeckers. HR, (2) III no. 14, 23, 127.



injury on any persons of Prussia or the Hanze, until the diet be finished between the king and the master of Prussia and the proconsuls and consuls of the cities of the Hanze at Utright in May next touching the reformation of offenders against the ancient leagues between the king and them of Prussia and the Hanze.<sup>9</sup>

The mandate was issued amidst a rash of illegal attacks on Flemish, Hanseatic and Italian shipping during 1450 and 1451, and the session at Utrecht produced no agreement.<sup>10</sup> From the outset Lübeck refused to treat with Thomas Kent, who had reappeared as a member of the English contingent. Delegates from the eastern Baltic, still determined to restrict expansion of English trade to the hinterland, preferred to ease the tension by offering short-term safe-conducts for English traffic. Prior to the meeting Cologne again distanced herself from Lübeck's cause, and her representatives and those of Hamburg, Bremen and Prussia were able to achieve a resumption of trade.<sup>11</sup> Lübeck's refusal to endorse the new arrangement, and her subsequent attempts to obstruct the maritime and overland shipment of English cloth, compounded confusion and resentment within the Hanse. The position of Cologne cannot be too highly stressed in this regard. Cologne merchants trading to England went so far as to request official letters from their civic council disassociating them from Lübeck.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> CPR. 1446-1452. 445. Also Foedera. XI 281-82.

<sup>10</sup> HR. (2) III no. 651; Urkundliche Geschichte des hansischen Stahlhofes zu London. ed. J.M. Lappenberg, (Osnabrück, 1967), 76-86; Akten. III no. 103-05, 131, 149. For the piracies see CPR. 1446-1452. 434-36, 438-42; HR. (2) III no. 626; HUB. VIII no. 33, 101, 415; HA Köln Hanse III K 2/136-37, 168, 186, 194, 206.

<sup>11</sup> Akten. III no. 103-05, 164; HR. (2) III no. 161, 693#1, 694#1-3, 10, 712#1, 2, 9; PRO. C47/30/10(7).

<sup>12</sup> Lübeck and the Danes blocked the passage of English ships and wares through the Sound in early 1452. Lübeck also banned the transport of English goods through the town. HUB. VIII no. 140, 159, 160, 171, 178, 227, 250, 261, 264, 293, 305, 307; HR. (2) IV no. 71, 80-82, 153. For the reaction of the Cologners see HUB. VIII no. 92-93.

Commentaries by E. Weise and W. Stark have challenged the traditional view that Lübeck held the Hanse together by taking a firm line against England.<sup>13</sup> Lübeck, the vigilant guardian of Hanseatic interests, actually had isolated herself from much of the rest of the community on this issue, and was not in a position to command the compliance of recalcitrant members. Prussia, Livonia, Cologne, and even Hamburg and Bremen rejected her uncompromising attitude, and welcomed another extension of the safe-conduct agreement with England the following year. England's written acceptance of the accord specifically excluded Lübeck, and it was not until 1456 that the town was included in a new eight-year safe-conduct pact.<sup>14</sup> Lacking the unanimous support of other major towns within the confederation, Lübeck was incapable of pressing the issue of compensation. Her pretensions to absolute political leadership of the Hanseatic community, however cherished, were illusory. Cologne's close links with England, and the presence of Hollanders and Englishmen in the Baltic were altering commercial relationships in northern Europe and encouraging regional particularism. Estrangement within the Hanseatic sphere and the decreasing effectiveness of Lübeck's political authority were but two manifestations of this larger and more fundamental process.

In the eastern Baltic war had broken out between the kingdom of Poland, the Prussian towns and the Teutonic Order, increasing the danger to foreign shipping. The defeat of the Teutonic knights at Tannenberg in 1410 had

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<sup>13</sup> W. Stark, op. cit., 183-211; E. Weise, "Die Hanse, England und die Merchant Adventurers : Das Zusammenwirken von Köln und Danzig", Jahrbuch des Kölnischen Geschichtsvereins, XXXI-XXXII (1956-57), 151-53. For the more traditional interpretation: P. Dollinger, op. cit., 302-05; W. Stein, Die Hanse und England : Ein hansisch-englischer Seekrieg im 15. Jahrhundert, 17-18, and F. Schulz, op. cit., 199.

<sup>14</sup> Akten. III no. 164, 285; CPR. 1452-1461. 123; HUB. VIII no. 280-85, 289, 380, 446; HR. (2) IV no. 168-70, 176-77, 236, 355, 399-401, 450-52; PRO. SC1/75.



effectively ended German expansion in the eastern Baltic, and was a grim prologue to an era of political instability fatal to the Order and profoundly important to the political destiny of the Hanse. Thenceforth, the towns east of the river Oder had an ever greater share in state affairs. In 1440 the estate-owners and some twenty towns, including the prominent trading centres of Danzig, Elbing and Thorn, formed a confederation to protest the Order's abusive taxation and arbitrary boycotts of merchandise. Fourteen years later, in 1454, this league allied with Poland in an attempt to break the power of the knights. The conflict disrupted trade in the Baltic for thirteen years.<sup>13</sup> As the war raged in the east, the quarrel in the west with England worsened steadily.

In England the demands for rights in Prussia had long since become little more than a pretext for piracy, and the government, shaken by dynastic uncertainties that soon would engulf the country in the Wars of the Roses, was powerless to stem the tide of violence and indiscriminate attacks on foreign shipping. A large Prussian hulk bringing grain from Danzig to Hull in 1453 was seized and diverted to Newcastle, where the cargo was disposed of "contrary to the friendship between the king and them of Prussia renewed of late".<sup>14</sup> The following year a kog from Middelburg was taken, and another hijacked while at

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<sup>13</sup> H. Rosenberg, "The Rise of the Junkers in Brandenburg Prussia 1410-1653", American Historical Review, XLIX (1943-44), 1-22, 228-42; M. Biskup, "Der preussische Bund 1440-1454", Hansische Studien III, ed. K. Fritze, E. Müller-Mertens, J. Schildhauer, (Weimar, 1975), 211-29. For a more comprehensive analysis of the decline of the Order in the fifteenth century see K.E. Murawski, Zwischen Tannenberg und Thorn, (Göttingen, 1953), and E. Weise, Das Widerstandsrecht im Ordenslande Preussen und das mittelalterliche Europa, (Göttingen, 1955). Lübeck's role in the dispute is reviewed in M. Biskup, "Das Reich, die wendische Hanse und die preussische Frage um die Mitte des 15. Jahrhunderts", Neue Hansische Studien, ed. K. Fritze, et al., (Berlin, 1970), 341-57.

<sup>14</sup> CPR, 1452-1461. 174, 179; HUB, VIII no. 297.



anchor off Coldwater.<sup>17</sup> By 1456 Hansards in Ipswich dared not leave port, claiming:

...Subjects of the king in ships of war intend to spoil [Hansards] of goods and merchandise shipped in their ships...under colour of search, asserting that the goods are not customed, contrary to the friendship between the king and them of the Hanze.<sup>18</sup>

The earl of Warwick - self-styled "kingmaker", privateer, and governor of Calais - instigated an attack on another Hanseatic salt fleet in July 1458. His English sea-rovers seized eighteen of Lübeck's ships and, in so doing, quickly revived animosities in the Wendish sector.<sup>19</sup> Yet, despite this and other attacks on Hanseatic shipping, other towns of the Hanse again offered Lübeck only scant support for any naval action in the North Sea. And, although privateers from Lübeck continued to prey on English shipping, English access to the Baltic already had been restricted severely by the wars in Prussia and Poland, limiting Lübeck's opportunities for retaliation.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> CPR. 1452-1461. 221, 223. Also HUB. VIII no. 363; HR. (2) IV no. 279.

<sup>18</sup> CPR. 1452-1461. 299. A linen cargo belonging to Hamburg merchants in Ipswich also had been seized, taken to Harwich, and exposed for sale. *Ibid.*, 311. There also was considerable hostility directed against Italians in England at this time. See R. Flenley, "London and Foreign merchants in the reign of Henry VI", *EHR.*, XXV (1910), 644-55.

<sup>19</sup> HR. (2) IV no. 666-67; HUB. VIII no. 769; CPR. 1452-1461. 436-43; CPR. 1461-1467. 231-32, 349-50.

<sup>20</sup> There was considerable disruption of intra-Baltic shipping from the outset of the war. HR. (2) IV no. 323-26, 377; HUB. X no. 498, 513, 524, 528, 538, 554, 563. In 1455 part of a salt fleet from Holland attempted to run Danzig's blockade of Memel and Königsberg. When ships from Amsterdam were distrained, the duke of Burgundy authorized the arrest of Danzig ships in his Lowland ports. Relations between Danzig and Holland remained strained for several years. HUB. VII no. 410, 412, 487-88, 498, 513, 524, 528, 554, 608, 656, 663. Danzig issued safe-conducts to three English ships in 1457, HUB. VII no. 557, but the English were by no means safe from Lübeck's raiders. *Ibid.*, no. 622-29; LUB. IX no. 510, 520, X no. 85, 381. Moreover, Danzig's captains were at liberty to attack 'enemy' shipping, and scores of confrontations ensued in the late 1450s, many of them involving Wendish ships allegedly trying to continue trade to Livonia. HUB. VIII no. 674-75, 684-85, 687, 692-95, 697-99, 702,

(Footnote Continued)

## The Hansards and Edward IV

Although the easily definable perimeters of any given dynastic epoch do not necessarily bear direct relation to developments affecting mercantile concerns, the crowning of Edward IV in 1461 clearly did mark the beginning of an important new era in relations between England and the Hanse. The imprint of the early years of the reign is not to be found in an altered commodity structure, nor even in the fluctuating volume of foreign trade. Rather, the 1460s must be assessed primarily within the context of an uneasy Anglo-Hanseatic dialogue, which delineated and galvanized economic and political interests inside the Hanse, and culminated in open conflict with the English.

The quarrel between England and the Wendish towns was still simmering when the new king came to the throne. English access to the Baltic was blocked, and the denizen merchant community strongly opposed the renewal of Hanseatic franchises, again citing what it perceived as the denial of reciprocal rights in Prussia. Mindful that much of the discontent emanated from the prosperous livery companies in London, and that the capital was one of the cornerstones of his political support, Edward immediately embarked on a policy designed to remove any complacency the Hansards may have had regarding their status in England, and ensure that, henceforth, England would take an active role in defining Anglo-Hanseatic issues and their order of priority. When the Hansards in London first petitioned for confirmation and extension of their ancient liberties, Edward demanded to know which towns were Hanse members, how his subjects were treated

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(Footnote Continued)

704, 707-15; HR. (2) IV no. 559, 590-91, 603, 687, 700-04. In the spring of 1461 Denmark forced a temporary closure of the Sound, and the chaos continued into the 1460s. LUB. X no. 33-35, 38, 41, 162, 173, 283, 354. Lübeck captured another English ship off Bornholm in 1463. LUB. X no. 381.

in those parts, and for what reasons he should grant the Hansards special status in his kingdom. The Hansards' reply apparently satisfied him for the time being, but hardly pacified the burgesses of London, who had a commission ready to present arguments against the Hanse in the coming parliament. The extension of Hanseatic privileges was granted, initially for only a few months, and then again until mid-summer 1465. But there was an important condition attached. Before the renewal expired, the Hanse was required to send a fully accredited embassy to England, "alle sake met dem heren konyng to udervanghende und to slichtene". The talks were also to include representatives from Denmark.<sup>21</sup>

The stipulation was crucial, since the extension was gained largely through the efforts of Cologne and Nijmegen merchants in London. Lübeck remained alienated, and initially refused to approach the English government on any issue other than reparations. And, although Danzig was anxious not to have Hanseatic privileges in England revoked, the war in the eastern Baltic cast doubt on whether the Prussian towns could or would agree to send a delegation. Nevertheless, the Steelyard merchants soon prepared their list of grievances for presentation - including numerous charges of harassment, false arrest and extortion by officials in London and the cinque ports - and set about laying the groundwork for the promised negotiations. After several delays the talks were convened, though not in England. Instead, English delegates attended the Hansetag at Hamburg in the summer of 1465.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> HR. (2) V no. 147, 166-80, 263#4-7,9, 282-85; CPR. 1461-1467. 109, 261, 276-77.

<sup>22</sup> HR. (2) V no. 263#8-87, 583; W. Stark, op. cit., 191; LUB. X no. 653; Urkundliche Geschichte des hansischen Stahlhofes zu London. ed. J.M. Lappenberg, (Osnabrück, 1967), 124-26; HUB. IX no. 196; PRO. E30/1381.



The ensuing discussions marked another pivotal turn in Anglo-Hanseatic diplomacy, for, although Lübeck participated, political alignment within the Hanse now allowed the English to weather a period of potentially grave economic vulnerability, and actually enhance to some degree their position vis à vis future discussions on parity in the Baltic. Notwithstanding the Hanse's compliance with England's request for the meeting, by the summer of 1465 England's position was not entirely favourable, and could have been extremely serious, had the Hanseatic confederation been able to display some semblance of unity. Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, had imposed a boycott of English woollens in October 1464, and England had countered with a ban on all Burgundian goods except foodstuffs in January 1465. The closing of the Burgundian dominions to English textile imports crippled the trade of the merchant adventurers at Antwerp, and immediately made friendly relations with the Hanse almost imperative. Hanseatic merchants were specifically exempted from the prohibitions in England,<sup>22</sup> and the Crown might have been forced to re-evaluate its options still further, had it been confronted by a united Hanse and, therefore, the possibility of virtual exclusion from the northern continental trade. Such a difficult situation did not present itself, however, as Lübeck's demands obviously were not consistent with the wishes of the other principal Hanse members. Fully aware of this division, the English delegates at Hamburg took a calculated risk and refused to discuss Lübeck's claims seriously. Moreover, they offered another five-year extension of Hanseatic privileges only on the condition that the Hansards agree to meet with them again within two years. The diet duly adjourned without agreement, although the extension and the proviso were in fact

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<sup>22</sup> Rot. Parl. V 565-66; PRO. C49/35/23; W. Stein, "Die Merchant Adventurers in Utrecht 1464-67", HGBll., IX (1899), 179-89; M.R. Thielemans, op. cit., 493.

proclaimed in the summer of 1466, with the term to commence on 24th June.<sup>224</sup>

On the surface, then, Anglo-Hanseatic diplomacy seemed to be plodding along according to a familiar scenario. The rank and file of the Hanseatic membership apparently would be satisfied with a reconfirmation of privileges in England, and the English pacified with a promise of further discussions and another opportunity to air their views again on reciprocity. An Anglo-Danish treaty also was proclaimed by early autumn.<sup>225</sup> Supported only by some of their Wendish neighbours on the question of compensation, the Lübecker's surely would not continue to jeopardize the interests of other towns that maintained a commercial presence in England. Hopefully, the issue would fade from the forefront unresolved, to the satisfaction of both the English government and Cologne, Hamburg and the Prussian towns, whose trade with England was infinitely more significant than Lübeck's.

Yet, it was this very absence of strong commercial ties between Lübeck and England which likely helped shape an entirely contrary Wendish response. Quite simply, since the Lübeckers no longer had a substantial English trade to protect, their claims against England continued to take precedence over the comprehensive interests of other Hanseatic merchant groups who did. It is open to question which groups better represented 'Hanseatic' interests at this juncture. To again let the English government's responsibility for Warwick's provocations go unchallenged would severely undermine the Hanse's ability to deter or counter any similar development in the

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<sup>224</sup> HR. (2) V no. 642-744; HUB. IX no. 196, 211-12, 245. Later in December that year, however, some Cologners had goods seized by London customs agents, who attempted to charge the poundage subsidy on Hanseatic merchandise contrary to the exemption. HUB. XI no. 1275.

<sup>225</sup> Diplomatarium Christierni Primi. ed. C.F. Wegener, (Copenhagen, 1956), no. 124.

future. On the other hand, a profound and obvious lack of consensus necessarily called into question the political credibility of the entire confederation and its leadership. Lübeck now steadfastly refused to send delegates overseas to discuss a truce or Hanseatic privileges, insisting instead that negotiations with the English focus on the reparations issue, and that they not take place in England. Rostock, Wismar, Stralsund and Bremen all concurred with this view.<sup>26</sup>

So another winter passed, and the English government received no confirmation of the Hanse's intent to enter into further discussions. Meanwhile, negotiations for a new mercantile treaty between England and Burgundy had been underway for some time, and by the spring of 1467 word reached the already worried Steelyard community of the growing displeasure among royal advisors over the silence of the Hanse. The Steelyard men knew well the significance of the proviso attached to the latest renewal of their privileges. They implored Cologne to intercede with Lübeck, and hastily dispatched their secretary, Hermann Wanmate, to Hamburg and Prussia to look for ways to bring pressure to bear on Lübeck and the Wendish towns. Only after a summer of apparently feverish intra-Hanse diplomatic activity was a compromise coaxed from Lübeck and her allies. With considerable relief Hamburg was able to write to King Edward on 4th November 1467 that Lübeck and all the principal Hanseatic towns, except Bremen, had agreed to a five-year truce with England, and to a meeting with English ambassadors, provided the venue was "op Duetschen erden" and discussions included the question of compensation.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> HUB. IX no. 304, 305, 308-10.

<sup>27</sup> HUB. IX no. 350, 387, 415; HR. (2) VI no. 53-54.



But by the end of the month a new course in Anglo-Burgundian relations rendered Lübeck's compliance almost academic, and cast serious doubt on the immediate resumption of talks. Charles the Bold, who had succeeded Duke Philip, now allied himself with Edward IV against Louis XI of France.<sup>28</sup> A new commercial treaty also was concluded. The Burgundian embargo on English goods was rescinded, and with it disappeared a principal device from which the Hanse had indirectly drawn economic leverage in its dealings with the Realm. Although the Hanse's privileged status in England was extended for a further year in March 1468<sup>29</sup> on the basis of the correspondence received from Hamburg, the English government had now affected an important shift in foreign trade policy. It had eased the dependence on the Hanseatic trade link by virtue of the agreement with Burgundy, and had firmly established that the special status of Hansards in England was conditional upon certain terms, albeit modest ones, set down by the king.

#### The Crisis of 1468

Once again, in the mid-1460s, English ships had attempted to return to the Baltic. Also, in deliberate defiance of the 1465 Anglo-Danish agreement, which included the prohibition of unlicensed English trade there, they frequented Iceland. It was not long before the behaviour of fishing crews from Bristol and Lynn touched off a series of recriminations eventually leading to a trial of strength with the Hanse. In 1467 they robbed and burned several houses on the island, and murdered the Danish governor.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> M.R. Thielemans, op. cit., 411-29; PRO. E30/522,1073(1),1608(4).

<sup>29</sup> HUB. IX no. 433-34.

<sup>30</sup> Foedera. XI 551; E.M. Carus-Wilson, "The Icelandic Trade", Studies. 179-80, 45th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, appendix 2. (London, 1885), 5.

A few months later, in June 1468, a handful of English merchant ships interrupted their voyage to Prussia to pay tolls to the Danes at Helsingor. While riding at anchor in the Sound, the English were encircled by a squadron of eight vessels, including two allegedly from Danzig, and obliged to surrender their ships and cargoes without offering resistance. English accounts of these and subsequent events include stories of Danzigers dividing up the merchandise in Copenhagen, and of English cloth being off-loaded in Danzig under cover of darkness.<sup>31</sup> The Danish king claimed that the confiscations were in response to the atrocities committed in Iceland the previous autumn, while "othir men of Denmarke saide, that the Kyng of England had writene unto the kyng of Denmarke, to take and do his best with Englisshmen, and that was the noise thorowe all the lande."<sup>32</sup>

Among those identified as leaders of the adventure were three Prussian captains, Heinrich Sterneberch, Vincent Stolle, and Michael Ertmann. Their participation in the seizure is undeniable, although their affiliation with Danzig at this time was perhaps not so obvious as the English testimony implied. They were among several who, having served on the side of Danzig and Poland in the war against the Order, were faced with a somewhat difficult transition to peaceful maritime enterprise upon its recent conclusion. Instead, they chose to serve the king of Denmark in his continuing disputes with the Swedes. They did so against the wishes of Danzig's council, and as a result were supposed to have forfeited citizenship of the town. When Ertmann returned there in

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<sup>31</sup> HUB. IX no. 468, 478, 519#4,7,8. In all, seven English ships were seized. Three others already had cleared the Sound and reached Danzig. They returned safely to England later in the year.

<sup>32</sup> HUB. IX no. 471, 476, 478, 495, 519-20, 523; "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum. ed. T. Hirsch, (Frankfurt, 1965), IV 730; HR. (2) VI no. 95, 97, 108.

September he was imprisoned temporarily. Danzig complained that responsibility for the Sound incident rested with Christian I of Denmark and a few Prussian expatriates, but English testimony also implicated several other Hansards, including two from Lübeck and eight more from Stralsund.

That the captures were the product of some sort of conspiracy there seems little doubt, though the true motives and the degree to which Hansards were involved are open to speculation. Four ships from Lynn and Boston were carrying almost all of the yearly woollen exports from the ports of the Wash and, very uncharacteristically, the Hanseatic share was not significant.<sup>33</sup> At least one Lynn merchant was forewarned by a Danzig associate that he would be wise to dispose of his goods "by a penny" before the ships sailed for the Baltic. In addition to the rumours in Denmark of King Edward's alleged complicity, the purser aboard one of the captured vessels claimed to have been told that the English were "solde longe tyme before" they ever reached the Sound. Moreover, though the Steelyard merchants emphasized that the mercenaries were banished from Danzig, Hansards and Englishmen alike attested to their presence there both before and after the incident. Sterneberch, a veteran of the Baltic privateering campaigns of the 1450s and one of Robert Wenynghton's victims some twenty years earlier, apparently admitted his involvement quite openly.<sup>34</sup>

King Christian's acknowledged responsibility for the arrest of the English ships, and his insistence that they were sequestered in retaliation for the raid in Iceland, did not soothe injured English pride or pacify indignant members of the merchant community, who, hitherto content

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<sup>33</sup> PRO. E122 10/9, 10/10, 97/9.

<sup>34</sup> HUB. IX no. 519; HA Köln Hanse III K 15/1,2,10,11,70,91,95.



to engage in piracy as the occasion suited them, clamoured for redress.<sup>35</sup> Edward's protests to Copenhagen brought no satisfaction, and the absence of Danish ships and goods in England virtually eliminated the possibility of economic reprisals against Denmark. As a result, the alleged involvement of the Danzigers assumed an exaggerated importance. The Sound incident would now precipitate a wave of persecution in kind, and so render prophetic a remark attributed to one of the accused that "there shuld a 1000 and 1000 menn of the Hans wyssh, that they had never be boren for the seid werk."<sup>36</sup> Casual commercial violence had plagued relations between England and the Hanse for more than half a century. Now, as royal advisors pressed the king for harsh reprisals, and the audacious spirit of England's mercantile sector was channeled anew into anti-Hanse hatred, the most serious and protracted disruption of Anglo-Hanseatic relations was about to begin.

Aside from the fervid complaints of injured English traders,<sup>37</sup> additional anti-Hanse agitation originated from within London's merchant fraternities, where attitudes were firmly rooted in the question of differential customs and subsidies favourable to German competitors, and the corresponding lack of reciprocal benefits. The importance of these concerns was magnified during the middle decades of the century, as an ever larger share of England's cloth export trade began to accrue to London. Little in the way of real or fancied injury was necessary for London's merchants and merchant adventurers to unleash a torrent of pent-up ill will against the Hansards, and the seizure of English ships at the Sound was far

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<sup>35</sup> HUB. IX no. 478.

<sup>36</sup> The testimony of Thomas Roger, HUB. IX no. 519.

<sup>37</sup> HUB. IX no. 478, 520. Affected merchants came from Hull, York, Lynn, Boston, and London.

more than they could have been expected to tolerate. The Hansards were the most highly privileged foreign merchant group in the Realm, and it seemed, during the emotion-charged days of late July at least, that their lavish benefits were repaid only with the treachery of the Baltic skippers.

London had become a much more permanent centre of court and royal administration under Edward IV than it had been during the reign of his predecessor, and the young king routinely turned to the foreign and native merchant communities for financial assistance. As a consequence, wealthy and influential merchant groups enjoyed access to him, and often were consulted before commercial legislation was tabled in parliament. And there too, the mercantile sector maintained significant representation.<sup>38</sup> Yet to this point Edward IV, himself a participant in overseas trading ventures, had not allowed mercantile pressures to interfere with political and diplomatic objectives, and had ensured that protectionist and nationalistic commercial legislation did not unduly restrict the Hanseatic merchants in England. Their privileges had been confirmed over the objections of London, and in 1462 they were exempted from the provisions of a charter granted to the city, which introduced a new tax on foreigners. Throughout the 1460s Edward had countered anti-Hanse prejudice by confirming charters only for short periods, and had established a policy that recognition of Hanseatic liberties in England was now dependent upon continued dialogue on English claims to reciprocity.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Acts of Court, 63-138; C. Ross, Edward IV. (Los Angeles, 1974), 353-55; S.L. Thrupp, The Merchant Class of Medieval London 1300-1500. (Chicago, 1948), 56-59, 83-84; M.S. Giuseppi, "Alien Merchants in England in the Fifteenth Century", Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, new series IX (1895), 75-98.

<sup>39</sup> C. Ross, op. cit., 356-65; Urkundliche Geschichte des hansischen Stahlhofes zu  
(Footnote Continued)

By the summer of 1468, however, the monarchy still was not secure. There remained the very real threat of Lancastrian insurrection backed by France, and Edward's secret marriage and the alliance with Burgundy had alienated his ambitious and powerful cousin, Warwick. Moreover, while the king's financial reliance on the London business community continued, resentment there was growing over the greed of the Woodvilles and their influence at court. The mounting discontent had been exacerbated only recently by a series of inconclusive treason trials wherein a number of prominent London burgesses were indicted. This had further offended the wealthy merchant sector. In consideration of the latest outrage on the high seas, then, it had become expedient for the monarch to agree to punitive measures, if for no better reason than to avoid the risk of increasing antipathy in the capital.<sup>40</sup>

Finally, in addition to the indignation of London's merchant sector, there was pressure for reprisals against the Hanse from within the king's council, where Richard Neville, earl of Warwick, quickly grasped the opportunity to turn public opinion to his own advantage. The interests of the anti-Hanse lobby now coincided with those of a faction centring around the Neville clan, whose involvement in the dispute with the Hansards stemmed from a curious combination of disregard for the foreign trading community, legitimate claims for damages at the Sound, and not a small measure of political brinkmanship.

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(Footnote Continued)

London. ed. J.M. Lappenberg, (Osnabrück, 1967), 127-29; Rot. Parl. V 508-09; PRO. C49/35/23; CLB. (L) Edward IV - Henry VII. 18; CPR. 1461-1467. 109, 261, 276-77. In the summer of 1461, at the instigation of London, Hanseatic privileges in England were initially confirmed only until the following February. This caused much anxiety among the Cologne and Danzig merchants, who lobbied successfully for an extension. HR. (2) V no. 147, 166-80, 263-3, 4, 30, 284. For the King's involvement in overseas trade see E. Power, "The English Wool Trade in the Reign of Edward IV", Cambridge Historical Journal, II (1926), 23. London's charter: CChR. VI 189.

<sup>40</sup> P.M. Kendall, Warwick the Kingmaker. (New York, 1957), 250-54.



The earl's personal contempt for the Hanse had been amply demonstrated off Calais a decade earlier, and he may have had interests in the ships taken at the Sound. But unlike others who suffered material losses in 1468, his motives for seeking hasty action against the Hansards were essentially political. He favoured Louis XI of France, and schemed to undermine the new Anglo-Burgundian alliance. His political ambitions conveniently meshed with the immediate concerns of London's more militant merchant groups. Reactionary measures out of all proportion to the seriousness of the original dispute could not help but cause embarrassment to King Edward in his new Burgundian alliance, and at the same time appease London's merchants. Moreover, if the punitive action were severe enough to provoke an open confrontation with the Hanse, the resultant disruption of cross-Channel shipping would stall a joint Anglo-Burgundian invasion of France. Warwick no longer dominated the will of the man he had made king of England, nor did he control his sovereign's council, but there is little doubt he had his way on this occasion. Indeed, it would have been surprising if he had not, given the mood in London, and the fact that the circle of royal advisors in the capital at this time included his brother John, earl of Northumberland, who owned one of the confiscated ships. Present too, and among those who could be counted unfriendly to the Hanse, were John Wenlock and Thomas Kent.<sup>41</sup>

However, the English government could ill afford to obstruct Anglo-Hanseatic commerce completely, and the strong connections with the merchants of Cologne remained vital. Cologners brought dyestuffs, metal products,

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<sup>41</sup> K.A. Fowler, "English Diplomacy and the Peace of Utrecht", Frühformen english-deutscher Handelspartnerschaft, ed. K. Friedland, (Köln Wien, 1976), 12-13; C.F. Richmond, Royal Administration, 388; C. Ross, op. cit., 365; HUB, IX no. 478, 482, 520. Wenlock was a councillor in Warwick's circle. J.R. Lander, "Council, Administration and Councillors 1461 to 1485", Bulletin of Historical Research, XXXII (1959), 160.

luxury goods and Rhinish wine to England, and were equally prominent in the Hanseatic share of London's cloth trade. They also borrowed money and bought cloth on credit in London, making their abrupt and total exclusion from the English trade not entirely desirable.<sup>42</sup>

It was the merchants of Cologne, moreover, who resisted the Hanse's artificial maintenance of the comptoir at Bruges, where Flemish cloth production was increasingly unable to meet the growing continental demand for woollens. The expanding cloth export industry of Holland and that of England had filled the void. But protectionist statutes prohibited the marketing of English cloth in Bruges, and the Hanse had granted the comptoir there a special tax on goods purchased in Zealand, Brabant and Holland. Cologners deliberately circumvented these restrictions by diverting some of their transit trade over Antwerp. Their objections to the tax in Bruges led to protracted arguments with Lübeck, both prior to the evacuation of the comptoir in the early 1450s and after the Hansards' return there in 1457.<sup>43</sup>

Cologne's obvious disillusion with her northern Hanseatic neighbours regarding the Bruges comptoir and affairs in the Baltic, together with her strong trade links with England, certainly invited English exploitation of Hanseatic disunity. A Commons' petition of 1441, which protested at length about alleged crimes by Hansards, had demanded suspension of Hanseatic privileges on condition that such measures should not apply to "Merchauntz, Citezeins, nother Inhabitantz of the Citee of Coleyn, whiche that untrewely colour not other

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<sup>42</sup> S. Jenks, "Das Schreiberbuch des John Thorpe und der hansische Handel in London 1457-59", HGBll., CI (1983), 67-113; CLRO. MC 1/3/224, 347, 364; MC 1/3A/1, 48, 67, 113, 116-18, 136, 210-12, 263; CPMR. 1437-1457. 58, 70; HUB. IX no. 525.

<sup>43</sup> HR. (2) III no. 288#6, 350, IV no. 161#6, 621-42.

Merchauntz of Pruse and the Hansze...."<sup>44</sup> And, throughout the middle decades of the century the Cologners had dissociated themselves from Anglo-Wendish disputes. So in 1468 the English government was careful to consider the town's special relationship with England.

On July 23rd representatives from the Steelyard were summoned to the Starchamber at Westminster to hear trumped-up accusations that the taking of the English ships had been part of a Dano-Hanseatic plot, allegedly motivated by fears that Hanseatic control of the traffic in "Oesterschen guede" would be threatened if the vessels reached Danzig. Although the allegations were hardly credible, the anticipated denials were rejected quickly, and the Hansards ordered to pay damages of £20,000 or face immediate imprisonment. The small delegation was, however, granted brief leave to consult with the rank and file of the Steelyard fellowship.<sup>45</sup>

The position of the Hansards was far from enviable. For the past three years their status in England had been confirmed on a short-term basis, and with the stipulation that representatives from distant Hanseatic towns unanimously consent to discussion of reciprocal status for Englishmen. No such talks had yet convened, and the latest renewal of Hanseatic privileges had been for only one year. The then governor of the Steelyard, Gerhard van Wesel, was in London when the new crisis arose, but many elder members of the fellowship experienced in matters of diplomacy were temporarily overseas. Moreover, at the time the Hansards were summoned to appear

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<sup>44</sup> Rot. Parl. V 64-65.

<sup>45</sup> The following outline of the arrests of the Hansards and the subsequent release of the Cologners is based on the deposition of Gerhard van Wesel, then governor of the Steelyard. HUB. IX no. 482, 490. Thereto also Ibid., no. 480, 524#4,57; HR. (2) VI no. 119, Appendices A.5.1 through A.5.5, and H. Buszello, Köln und England 1468-1509", Mitteilungen aus dem Stadtarchiv von Köln, LX (1971), 437.



before the king's council, both of their regular English proctors were away from London as well. According to van Wesel, the men of the Steelyard therefore agreed to bind themselves to various Englishmen for the sum of the damages rather than go to prison and have their property confiscated - at least until they could prove their innocence. Whereupon they understood that they would be allowed sufficient time to prepare documentation for the said purpose. However, on the afternoon of the 28th the mayor of London, accompanied by sheriffs and aldermen, appeared at the Steelyard gates in the king's name, to arrest the inhabitants and seal the warehouses. The bewildered Hansards, many of them young servants and factors, were led away to the sheriff's house and Ludgate prison. Caught unawares and unable to warn their ships' captains, Hansards in Boston, Lynn, Ipswich, Colchester and "allen plaetsen in England" also were arrested, and had their goods and ships impounded.

But almost immediately the Steelyard's chief representative was offered an opportunity to speak again with the chancellor, Robert Stillington, whose eventual line of enquiry all but betrayed the government's intent. By asking about the composition of the Steelyard fellowship, Stillington first established that van Wesel and Peter Bodenclop, who had been allowed to accompany him, were Cologners. He then inquired how Cologne stood with the king of Denmark, at the same time hinting that he already had information of some ongoing dispute. Without benefit of further prompting, the Hanseatic representative told the chancellor what he apparently wanted to hear. Cologne, he replied, had been at odds with Denmark for some time. Turning to the recorder present, Stillington ventured to suggest that this might be of interest to the king. And so, evidently, it was.

Accompanied by legal counsel, van Wesel returned to Westminster within a day or two, ostensibly to present documents in defence of the Hansards. On this occasion,

though, he was received by George Neville, the archbishop of York, who indicated that there was no immediate need for documentation. He further informed van Wesel that the young servants from the Steelyard and all the merchants of Cologne were to be freed, by the king's grace, on condition that they not leave England.

If van Wesel's version of events is believed, he and the Cologners had been presented with a fait accompli which left them precious little choice but to accept what they had been offered. The rest of the Hansards and their property would remain under arrest at least until the autumn, when the king's council would make a definitive quasi-judicial ruling on the matter. In the interim, would not the interests of the Hanse, to say nothing of the Cologners, be best served if some of the Steelyard merchants remained free to prepare a defence of the fellowship? But in mid-November, after all the legal arguments had been heard, the council proclaimed a "sentence" which ultimately drove the wedge deeper between the Cologners and their jailed colleagues. The property of the Cologne merchants was returned to them. That of other Hansards was divided up to compensate injured Englishmen. The earl of Northumberland alone was awarded more than £1,250 for his losses at the Sound. Except for the Cologners, all the Hansards in England, including some young factors and mariners, remained incarcerated. A London mob stormed the Steelyard, and an envoy of the emperor was slain in the street. Control of "Hanseatic" commerce in England reverted exclusively to the merchants of Cologne.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> HUB. IX no. 471, 497, 501-07, 511, 526-28, 530-33, 548-49, XI no. 1310; HR. (2) VI no. 119-24, VII no. 34. A partial inventory of property seizures in England includes everything from stock merchandise to small household items. HA Köln Hanse IV 68/47-64.

The preferential treatment accorded Cologne was as much another compromise, intended to appease powerful interest groups in and around London, as a stratagem aimed at further exploiting Hanseatic disunity. The penalty imposed on the other Hansards would avenge the merchants of London and the east coast ports who suffered losses at the Sound, but leave intact an integral link in England's foreign trade. On the surface the risks seemed minimal in this respect, for on the basis of past precedent the English might presume that the Cologners would opt for a privileged status in England that excluded other Hansards. Cologne merchants certainly valued their English trade too highly to relinquish it by choice. But had they not, and had they elected instead to close ranks with the rest of the Hanse, there still would have been ample opportunity for serious negotiation.<sup>47</sup> On the other hand, the vindictive punishment meted out to the Esterlings was a serious and counter-productive departure from Edward IV's previous policy, in that it effectively subverted any real chance of gaining a larger share of the Baltic trade. The incessant complaints about the Hansards ignoring the reciprocal terms agreed to in 1437, less than convincing at the best of times, now were entirely meaningless.

#### England's mercantile interests in the Baltic

What, then, was the erstwhile role of the English in the Baltic trade? The clamour for reciprocity invariably focused on Prussia, and there is no question that the most coveted market was that of the Danzig staple. Baltic Hansards, and especially Danzig shippers, were very important in the overseas commerce of London and of

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<sup>47</sup> For the dubious suggestion that England needed the Cologners for their shipping interests, see F.R. Salter, "The Hanse, Cologne and the Crisis of 1468", ECHR., III (1931), 93-101.



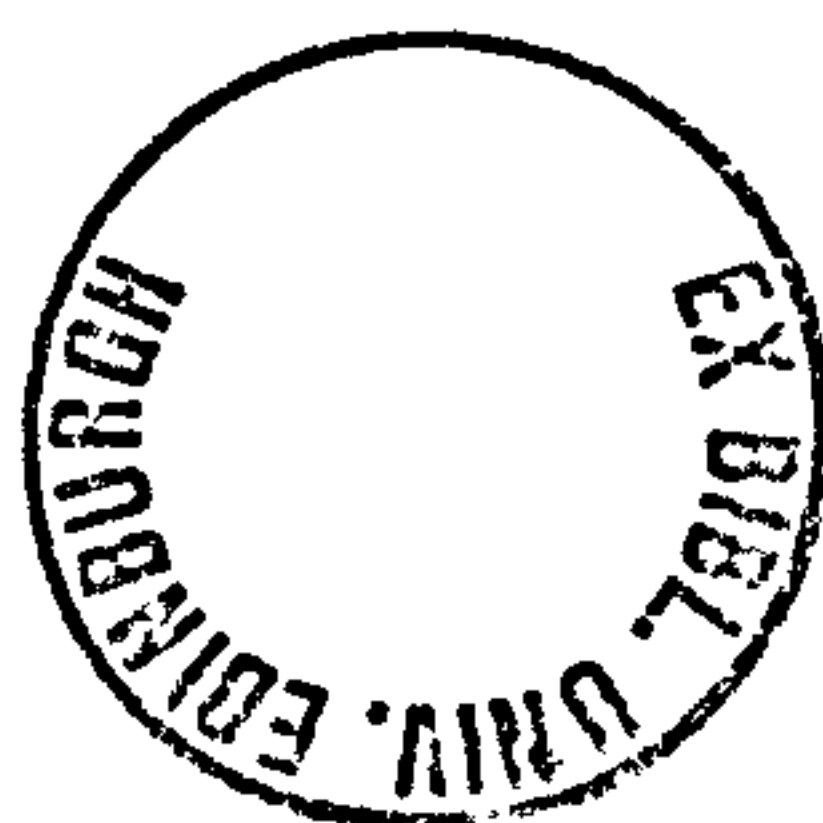
England's east coast ports, but direct trade between the Baltic and England was by no means the exclusive preserve of the Esterlings. Despite the seemingly endless string of complaints, an organization of English merchants still functioned in Danzig in the mid-fifteenth century. No doubt the Englishmen were well acquainted with the central meeting place for merchants in Danzig, the Artushof, which would evolve later in the century as the town's international commercial hall. In 1447 at least four English ships called at Danzig, but the number of resident Englishmen arrested there four years later is uncertain. However, a written plea for the release of a colleague was made in the name of the "Alderleuute und der gemeyne couffman us Engelant nuu czu czeit czu Danczke in Preuwsen wesende."<sup>48</sup> One of this fellowship, Robert Parker, even requested permission to continue his trade there at least until the meeting at Utrecht between Hanseatic and English officials had been concluded. Merchants from Lynn had shared in the cargo of a Holland ship captured by pirates on a voyage from Prussia to England in 1450, and an English ship seized by the Danes on its return voyage from Prussia carried Londoner John West, factor of two Boston merchants, on whose behalf he negotiated the vessel's release.<sup>49</sup>

Letters which accompanied a shipment of woollens from Lynn aboard a Danzig ship in the spring of 1452 attest to the continued presence of a group of English business agents in Danzig, despite the turbulent state of Anglo-Hanseatic affairs. The cloth was to be received by William Yekes and Thomas Syndal, factors of two Lynn merchants, John Francis and Henry Berinkham. Robert

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<sup>48</sup> HUB. VIII no. 45; B. Kuske, Quellen. I no. 1169, 1193. For the Artushof: P. Simson, Der Artushof in Danzig und seine Bruderschaften, die Banken. (Aalen, 1969), esp. 1-66.

<sup>49</sup> HUB. VIII no. 46; PRO. C1/19/295, H.J. Smit, Bronnen. (I) II no. 1357.



Parker also was named as agent for Robert Stocker, and Berinkham's instructions for disposal of his portion of the cargo were addressed to yet another Englishman in Danzig, one John Jacksall. In addition, a Hanseatic agent was used, perhaps to circumvent customs duties either at Lynn or Danzig. Some of the cloth was sent to Yekes under the seal of a Hansard. The Englishman was instructed to relay news of its arrival to a Danzig intermediary, who in turn would contact the intended recipient, a Danziger named Mekelfeldene. The parcel of cloth was actually payment of a £5 debt owed Mekelfeldene by Berinkham.<sup>50</sup>

The English presence in Danzig apparently was maintained throughout the mid-1450s. John Jacksall was still trading there in the spring of 1455, and in the interim London merchant Stephen Barry and his partners had been granted freedom to trade throughout Prussia for a period of twelve years. Barry already had been shipping English cloth to the Baltic as early as 1448.<sup>51</sup> In May 1457 Danzig issued additional safe-conducts, valid until September of the following year, for three English ships from Lynn and Hull. The privilege applied to ten English merchants identified by name, together with "al eren mannen und geselschopen". Included among them was the eminent Lynn merchant, John Thorsby, who indeed purchased

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<sup>50</sup> HUB. VIII no. 122, 123, 128. The "Berinkham" of these letters likely was Lynn merchant Henry Bermingham, who, together with Robert Stocker's brother John, was part of Thomas Kent's delegation in 1450-51. HR. (2) III no. 474-75, 708; Calendar of French Rolls - Henry VI : 48th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, appendix 2. (London, 1887), 384.

<sup>51</sup> CPR. 1446-1452. 160; HUB. VIII no. 354, 393. Barry, William Henry Hancock, James Frecht and one Richard Brown of Norwich owned cloth and tin aboard two Danzig-bound ships seized by the Lübeckers in 1453. The vessels operated out of Arnemuiden and Antwerp, but their cargoes, which were also shared by merchants from Cologne, Nijmegen, Antwerp and Danzig, apparently were freighted in London and/or Colchester. HUB. VIII no. 244, 249. For Hancock see also HUB. VIII no. 293.



a ship in Danzig later in the year.<sup>52</sup> It is quite possible, perhaps even likely, that these individuals and others from Lynn already were established in the Baltic trade, and that their safe-conducts simply confirmed the status quo. Lynn customs records indicate that a large bulk cargo consisting exclusively of Baltic commodities - grain, iron, pitch, tar, "Revell fflax" and "barell stavys"- had been off-loaded from an English ship for indigenous English merchants the previous autumn.<sup>53</sup> But the continued presence of English merchants in the Baltic throughout the 1450s relied much less on trading privileges in Danzig than on Anglo-Danish relations and the business acumen of individual entrepreneurs and their luck in avoiding the political quarrels which endangered seaborne commerce. The luck of the English ran out before the end of the decade, and the decisive blow probably was Lübeck's response to Warwick's attack on the salt fleet in 1458. Thereafter the situation of Englishmen attempting to trade to the Baltic became precarious in the extreme, and for a number of years there is little evidence of a sustained English presence in Danzig.

None of the four ships entering Danzig from England in 1460 were English, and of the names of cargo owners listed in the Danzig port books, only one is easily identifiable as non-German, and is perhaps that of an Englishman. Moreover, surviving English customs particulars for the late 1450s and early 1460s show that Baltic ships discharging cargo in England, did so almost exclusively for Hanseatic merchants.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> HUB. VIII no. 574, 639. Although most of the cargo off-loaded from four Danzig ships at Hull in the summer of 1453 belonged to Hansards, quantities of wainscots, boards, linen and bowstaves also were carried for indigenous English merchants, including Katerina Ratclyff and William Gaunte. PRO. E122 61/71.

<sup>53</sup> PRO. E122 96/37, shipper Thomas Clerkson, 13th September 1457.

<sup>54</sup> WAPG. 300.19/1 2r.,3v.,4lv.,42v.; PRO. E122 9/68, 10/4, 62/1,3,4,5, 96/41,  
(Footnote Continued)



Undoubtedly the Danes and Lübeckers were largely responsible for limiting English participation in the Baltic trade at this time. Henry VI appealed to Lübeck in early 1461 for the return of the 'Maryeflour de Gernesay', taken by Lübeck's raiders. Precisely where this ship was captured is unclear, but two years later another English vessel, fully laden at Danzig, was intercepted by Lübeckers on the homeward voyage to Lynn. The ship and its cargo of wainscots, tar and iron was forfeited, and the English mariners were dispersed among the Hanseatic ships.<sup>33</sup>

If the risks to shipping were insufficient in themselves to curtail English activity, incentive for English merchants must have been further dampened by the generally unstable cloth market in the eastern Baltic. The reopening of the Bruges comptoir in 1457-58 had re-established ready access to the supply of Flemish woollens, and Lübeck, regardless of the disruption of intra-Baltic trade, remained the key traditional distributor to eastern regions. Lübeck's blockade of the Sound notwithstanding, the enhanced availability of Flemish cloth, together with complaints in Riga, Reval and Dorpat regarding undersized and falsely packed English cloth, rendered the market for English woollens in Livonia thoroughly unpromising. Though English cloth was still available there, it simply was not wanted.<sup>34</sup> So by the early 1460s, English trade to the Baltic, if it continued

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(Footnote Continued)

97/1,2. From Michaelmas 1459 to March 1461 Danzig shippers calling at Lynn carried some cargo for Englishmen, but with a total value of less than £15. PRO. E122 96/41.

<sup>33</sup> LUB. X no. 85, 381.

<sup>34</sup> HR. (2) IV no. 568#3, V no. 113; W. Stein, "Handelsbriefe aus Riga und Königsberg von 1458 und 1461", HGBll., IX (1898), 59-125, letters 10, 12, 18, 27. English cloth was previously available in Reval as well. Kämmereibuch der Stadt Reval 1432-1463. ed. R. Vogelsang, (Köln Wien, 1976), I no. 117, 693, 772, II no. 1190; Kämmereibuch der Stadt Reval 1463-1507. ed. R. Vogelsang, (Köln Wien, 1981), I no. 1337.

at all, was confined more than ever before to the Danzig staple. Yet even this link was threatened by the continuing war between Poland and the Teutonic knights. By 1465 Danzig had to warn English shippers to venture into the Baltic only in convoys, as no protection could be guaranteed for individual captains foolhardy enough to come alone.<sup>57</sup>

The decline of direct English participation in the Anglo-Baltic trade, which began after 1458, lasted until the mid-1460s, when it was remedied within a very short period by a series of timely economic and political developments. In 1464 the English pound sterling was devalued by 25%. This monetary reform, worthy of note in the contemporary Danzig chronicle of Caspar Weinreich, most certainly strengthened English cloth on foreign markets and encouraged exports.<sup>58</sup> The following year saw England and Denmark temporarily set aside their long-standing hostilities and reach agreement on a commercial treaty. This effectively eliminated any extraneous support the Lübeckers could muster for obstruction of English shipping. The rest of the Hanseatic community had long since recognized Lübeck's quarrel with England as a dead issue, and the recent meetings with English envoys at Hamburg merely emphasized this.<sup>59</sup> The Sound, for all intents and purposes, was again open to English traffic. Within a year, too, the war against the Teutonic knights, which had played havoc with Baltic

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<sup>57</sup> HUB. IX no. 162. Moreover, though seven Hanseatic ships brought more than £600 worth of bulk freight to Lynn that year, none of it was customed to English merchants. Nor did the Baltic ships carry any cloth exports for denizens. PRO. E122 97/4. The following year indigenous merchant John Stokys shipped twenty cloths in a Danzig vessel. PRO. E122 97/6,7.

<sup>58</sup> "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 794.

<sup>59</sup> 45th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, appendix 2. (London, 1885), 5; Diplomatarium Christierni Primi. ed. C.F. Wegener, (Copenhagen, 1856), no. 124; HUB. IX no. 196, 211-12; HR. (2) V no. 642-744.



shipping, ground to its conclusion. Within a remarkably short space of time the two principal risks to Anglo-Baltic trade had been removed.

Whether or not a community of resident English merchants continued to exist in Danzig by the mid-1460s, this brief period of political stabilization after 1465 certainly provided the impetus for English traders to return there. And return they did. The 'Raphael' of Bristol sailed home from Danzig in the autumn of 1467, freighted with lumber, tar, bowstaves, counters and tables. Some sixteen English merchants and mariners who had made the return journey from the Baltic were set ashore safely at Grimsby, Holderness, Hull and Sandwich, before the vessel finally was wrecked by storm off Kilkampton. Nor did all the Englishmen come home that year. At least one other merchant, William Wathyne of London, remained in Danzig through the winter of 1467-68.<sup>40</sup>

The changed political climate set the stage for the series of bizarre and dramatic events that followed in the summer of 1468. The prevailing circumstances obviously favoured a concerted attempt to penetrate the Baltic market, and if ever there was an opportunity to establish a strong English presence in the region, surely this was it. But squandered opportunities were synonymous with England's Baltic experience in the fifteenth century, and when ten English ships set sail for Danzig in the spring of 1468, this latest chance already had

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<sup>40</sup> CPR. 1467-1477. 101, 168-69; HUB. IX no. 519. A cargo brought to Hull by Danzig shipper Derick Schach in June 1467 included pitch, tar, wainscots and iron worth £33 belonging to denizen Thomas Nelson. PRO. E122 62/10. Schach's outbound cargo consisted of lead and woollens, including twenty-four cloths customed to indigenous merchant John Michell. Also, in 1466 Thomas Howard had hired John Yonge at Deptford to captain his ship on a voyage to Prussia. M.A.S. Hickmore, The Ship-building Industry on the east and south coasts of England in the fifteenth Century. unpublished M.A. thesis, (London, 1937), 34, citing the Howards' Manners and Household Expenses, etc.



been lost through the senseless behaviour of the English fishermen in Iceland some months before. Once again the king of Denmark had been offended and provoked, and he would not be long in exacting his price from an unsuspecting English fleet bound for the Baltic. And if advocates of protectionism in Danzig had been concerned seriously about an imminent English intrusion, the antics of those English mariners in Iceland must have played directly into their hands. Experience with the Hollanders and Zealanders had already demonstrated that statutes alone were not enough to restrict foreigners in the Baltic trade. But a new English thrust could be stopped if there was a reasonable pretext for limiting passage through the Sound. The English, themselves, had just created one. King Christian would, for his own reasons, initiate the capture of the English fleet, but circumstantial evidence of some complicity within the Hanseatic towns is hardly surprising.

Yet, irrespective of protectionist currents in Danzig, it is scarcely plausible that the attack was condoned, let alone actuated by the governing oligarchy there. The taking of an English fleet was sure to provoke reprisals that could, and ultimately did, jeopardize Danzig's access to the lucrative English market. Obvious targets for reprisals would be the Esterling shippers and merchants in eastern England, among whom the Danzigers were preponderant. If the Sound incident was staged with the compliance of Danzig, then the absence of precautionary measures to safeguard interests in England is all the more remarkable. There apparently was no discrete evacuation of individuals or goods from the east coast ports during the spring of 1468. Instead, many of Danzig's Englandfahrer faced arrest there by late July, and several others unwittingly called at Hull and Lynn in August

and were promptly gaoled. At least seven, and perhaps as many as nine Danzig ships were arrested in England.<sup>41</sup>

There is, perhaps, slightly better reason to suspect the Wendish Bergenfahrer of collusion. They staunchly resisted the intrusion of Hollanders and Englishmen into the Norwegian and Icelandic fisheries, and this coloured their political attitudes vis à vis neighbouring Denmark. The crimes of the English in Iceland were ample excuse for both the Danish king and the Wendish towns to escalate the violence. Economic risk to the Danes was minimal, as their trade with England was insignificant. That of the Wendish towns was concentrated largely in the fish trade at Boston. Coincidentally, no Wendish ships had called at the Lincolnshire port since 1465, and the last consignment belonging to the Bergenfahrer was discharged from an English ship in January 1468. Within a year, Lübeck had also persuaded Denmark to impose severe restrictions on Hollanders trading to Iceland and Bergen.<sup>42</sup> But the north Atlantic fisheries were not the only issue. Relations between England and Lübeck had been strained for two decades, and the Crown's continued refusal to indemnify victims of Warwick's attack on the salt ships in 1458 was a source of lingering humiliation for the Lübeckers.

In the spring of 1468, three English ships - two from Newcastle and one from Southampton - were permitted to pass safely to Danzig. During the second week of June, seven more reached the Sound and were seized. Of these, five had weighed anchor at either Boston or Lynn, and their cargoes are recorded in the extant customs

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<sup>41</sup> HUB. IX no. 541. A draft petition denying Danzig's culpability lists nine ships taken: one each at Newcastle, Hull, Scarborough, Southwold and Ipswich, and two each at London and Lynn. HA Köln Hanse III K 15/1.

<sup>42</sup> LUB. XI no. 515, "Die Chronik Christians von Geren", Die Lübecker Bergenfahrer und ihre Chronistik, ed. F. Bruns, (Berlin, 1900), 357.

particulars for the Wash ports.<sup>43</sup> Small quantities of worsteds, cheese, lead and Gascon wine were aboard, but of much greater significance were the extraordinary cloth cargoes. A total of 1,256 broadcloths were being carried to the Baltic for no fewer than three dozen different English merchants. Equally astonishing was the Hanseatic tally of only 56 cloths aboard the English vessels, and a like number carried in Hanseatic ships. During the preceding three years total combined cloth exports for Boston and Lynn fluctuated rather radically, but averaged around 1,000 units annually, with denizens accounting for only about 400 per year. The 1468 Lynn totals indicate not only an enormous surge in woollen exports, but also that virtually all of the cloth was shipped to the Baltic by indigenous English merchants. And in Boston, the 346 cloths sent to the Baltic by English merchants represented well over half of the denizen total for that port. The inordinately disproportionate shares of Englishmen and Hanseatic merchants may be misleading, however. Although their usual privileges were supposed to be in effect, the Hansards at Hull, Lynn and Boston apparently were assessed the poundage subsidy, in addition to the usual cloth and petty custom charges, from 1466 through the spring of 1468, and there is some evidence to suggest that Hansards may have attempted to compensate by shipping cloth at denizen rates, through English intermediaries.<sup>44</sup> Needless to say, therefore, if any of the principal Steelyard merchants had been party to a plot to ambush the English ships, then sending merchandise under

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<sup>43</sup> PRO. E122 10/9,10, 97/9; HUB. IX no. 478.

<sup>44</sup> Hans Barenbrock, an Esterling at the Steelyard, later claimed to have sent 84 cloths in the ships from Boston and Lynn and 13 more in a vessel from London, all through the agency of indigenous merchant William Wales. Indeed, while Barenbrock is not listed in the appropriate accounts for the ports of the Wash, Wales is shown to have had 180 cloths customed in his name - far more than any other single English merchant - aboard ships later taken at the Sound. PRO. E122 97/9: the 'James' of Lynn and the 'Christopher' of Boston, departing Lynn on 2nd May 1468. HUB. IX no. 541#viii. For Hansards being charged poundage see PRO. E122 10/8, 62/10, 97/6,7,8.



the seal of an Englishman, regardless of any possible tariff advantages, was the last thing they would have considered.

Another ship, the earl of Northumberland's 'Valentine', had sailed from Newcastle to Hull before setting out for Danzig. Though no particulars of customs survive for these ports, complaints of the ship's capture refer to another rich cloth cargo. Still less is known of the seventh ship, the 'George' of London, though several Londoners claimed damages after the vessel was seized. In all, sixty-eight English merchants from London, York and Hull claimed shares in the captured cargoes.<sup>45</sup>

During the two decades immediately prior to the Sound incident English participation in the Baltic trade had been marked by three distinct phases, which together provide a context for the capture, and indeed the very existence of such exceptional cargoes in 1468. After 1450 direct English involvement in trade to and from the Baltic, though limited, had continued, despite the obstinacy of Lübeck and various other threats to shipping. There is ample evidence that at least a small English merchant community functioned in Danzig until 1458. Thereafter, for a period of perhaps seven or eight years, English trade there was in a state of decline owing to the vigorous obstruction of English shipping by Lübeck and the Danes, and the escalation of the sea war in the eastern region. In addition to these problems of access, there was also a decline in the popularity of English woollens in Livonia, which in any case depended on Lübeck as a main supplier. Hence, by the mid-1460s, when the Anglo-Danish treaty and the cessation of war in the east created more favourable circumstances for increased commerce, the English were faced not merely with the

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<sup>45</sup> HUB. IX no. 478, 520.

prospect of strengthening their trade, but with the Herculean task of totally re-establishing their presence in the region. The attempt to reconstruct strong English trading links with Danzig began in 1466, and was manifest in the safe passage of ships the following year and the unusually large number of English vessels bound for the Baltic in 1468.

Persistent English claims to Baltic trading privileges comparable to those enjoyed by Hansards in England, as well as the related protests about restrictions in Hanseatic towns, must also be assessed within the context of the English role in the Baltic trade during the period 1450 to 1468. The sustained, albeit modest English presence in Danzig had been interrupted not as the result of discriminatory statutes there, but because of extreme risks to English shipping. Yet, what English complaints invariably chose to ignore was the fact that access to Baltic markets hinged on passage through the Sound. In other words, it depended to a great extent on relations with Denmark. Hollanders and Zealanders had illustrated this throughout the 1450s and 1460s, by actively pursuing peaceful relations with the Danes in order to safeguard their long-distance carriage trade in salt and grain.<sup>46</sup> Notwithstanding disruptions in the eastern regions, they had demonstrated that if passage to the Baltic could be assured for prolonged periods, the effectiveness of regulatory ordinances in Lübeck, Danzig and Riga was limited.

The English, by contrast, were not primarily bulk carriers, and they certainly lacked the shipping tonnage to compete in that type of trade with the Hansards, Hollanders, and Zealanders. But even if they had

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<sup>46</sup> F. Ketner, Handel en Scheepvaart van Amsterdam in de vijftiende Eeuw. (Leiden, 1946), 116-18; H.A. Poelman, Bronnen. (1) II no. 20-51, 2073, 2104, 2281.

contemplated long-term participation in the Baltic trade on a lesser scale, such as the exchange of high-value woollens for bulk raw materials, the first prerequisite would still have to be an Anglo-Danish relationship, and preferably one with Lübeck, which would enable consistent safe passage through the Sound. Without this, the question of restrictions or reciprocal rights was completely irrelevant. The pattern of the mid-1450s and of the period 1465-68 indicates that the Danzig staple could and did attract English merchants and shipping, regardless of statutes there designed to restrict them. The often predictable English protests were lodged at least in part, then, for rhetorical effect. The real issue was the widely resented privileged status of Hansards in England.

#### Intra-Hanse political alignment

A quarter century had passed since the Peace of Copenhagen had ended the war between Holland and the Wendish towns in 1441 and compelled Lübeck to reopen the Sound. In the interim, however, the Hanse's political relationship with the Burgundian territories had been anything but tranquil. There were persistent complaints of violations of Hanseatic trading privileges at Bruges, while piratical attacks on the Hanse's North Sea shipping had scarcely been affected by the treaty. The Hanse, led by Lübeck, had resorted to a boycott of Flanders in 1451, and had transferred the Bruges comptoir to the independent bishopric of Utrecht. The ban was contravened routinely by the merchants of several Hanseatic towns, including Duisburg, Soest and Cologne.<sup>47</sup> Flemish cloth, purchased at Bruges and at the Antwerp market, continued

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<sup>47</sup> HR. (2) III no. 694-5-6, IV no. 26-28, 64-65, 247-31-42, 250, 414; HUB. VIII no. 64, 203, 209, 376, 378, 406.



to be distributed throughout Hanseatic territory as far east as Prussia. By 1457 the Hansards were obliged to return to Bruges and lift their self-imposed restrictions.<sup>46</sup> The trade of Holland in particular had benefited, Cologne had been further alienated from Lübeck, and many merchants elected not to return to Bruges.

Elsewhere, King Casimir IV of Poland and the Prussian towns had prevailed, and the war against the Teutonic Order had ended in 1466 with the second Treaty of Thorn. Poland gained full sovereignty over all of western Prussia, and the king granted Danzig virtually exclusive authority in matters of trade.<sup>47</sup> Already the busiest of the Prussian ports, Danzig attempted to ensure her long-term mercantile ascendancy by forbidding transactions between foreign traders and interior markets, except through the agency of one of her citizens. Hence, although they had collaborated with the towns against the Order, the landed estates, which produced many of Prussia's exportable raw products, acquiesced, in the end, to the authority of Danzig's mercantile elite. The chronic disorder of the previous decade and the ultimate demise of the knights had indeed allowed members of the trading community in the eastern Baltic ports to preserve, consolidate, and enhance their commercial and political predominance.

It has been suggested by P. Dollinger that the collapse of the Teutonic Order was not entirely prejudicial to Hanseatic interests, on the premise that:

To some extent the Hansa suffered from the backlash of the disrepute into which its most illustrious member had fallen, but she was also freed from commercial rivalry and from

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<sup>46</sup> F. Vollbehr, op. cit., 54-61; HUB. VIII no. 499, 508, 579, 630; W. Friccius, Der Wirtschaftskrieg als Mittel hansischer Politik im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert. (Lübeck, 1932), 52-82.

<sup>47</sup> Akten. IV no. 367; HUB. VIII no. 563; H. Rosenberg, op. cit., 235.

the selfish policies of a principality whose ambitious plans had often given her just cause to fear.<sup>70</sup>

This view has the appeal of simplicity, but if the defeat of the Teutonic Order injured Hanseatic prestige, what then of the ignominious failure of the Hanse's great Wendish towns against Holland a generation earlier? The implications of that struggle and the treaty that ended it went far beyond matters of prestige and reputation, and so too did the ruin of the Teutonic knights in Prussia. It had coincided with, and contributed to the rise of increasingly strong-willed merchant oligarchies in the Prussian towns, where interests were bound up with the maintenance and increase of civic mercantile authority. As a natural consequence, disagreements with the Wendish towns accentuated regional diversity. It is in this sense that the collapse of the Order can be seen to have imperilled political cohesion within the Hanse. The selfish policies of the Order may well have been removed, but they were replaced by the equally narrow particularism of Danzig's commercial bourgeoisie. Upon being accorded full authority in affairs of trade by Casimir IV, Danzig continued to attempt to restrict the activities of foreigners, resolving:

...keyn Nuremberger, Lumbarth, Engelscher,  
Hollandir, Flamingk, Jude, adir welcherley  
wezens fremden wsz reichen unde landen eyn  
eyn iderman ist...privilegia adir freiheit  
haben sal zcu kouffslagen adir zcu wonen....<sup>71</sup>

Throughout the fifteenth century the trading centres of Prussia and Livonia had, like their Hanseatic neighbours to the west, adopted attitudes of independent protectionism regarding diplomatic and commercial policy. This approach was manifest in open confrontation with the

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<sup>70</sup> P. Dollinger, op. cit., 284, 293.

<sup>71</sup> Akten. IV no. 367.

Order, and in persistent disagreements with Lübeck vis à vis trade with western Europe through the Sound, and the protection of resource bases and markets in the eastern European hinterland. Moreover, Lübeck had not supported Danzig against the knights, since that would have entailed voluntary disruption of the town's important trade to Riga, and risked a quarrel with the Danish monarch, who favoured the Order. Of the Prussian ports, only Königsberg was subject to the rule of the Order after 1466. The others stood at the vanguard of protectionism in the eastern Hanseatic sphere.

By 1468, unity within the Hanse seemed to exist only so far as it served individual interests. While the Lübeckers continued to delude themselves about their supposed political pre-eminence within the confederation, the changing realities of the European trading economy had begun to lead other prosperous towns such as Bremen and Hamburg, and particularly Danzig and Cologne, in diverse directions. In matters of considerable economic and political importance, all had adopted a particularism based on control of regional markets, centres of production, or specific foreign trade links. Cologne objected to the expensive maintenance of the Bruges comptoir, strengthened her hold on the trade in dyestuffs, metal products and textiles, and openly cultivated a special relationship with England. Bremen, too, often remained detached from the Wendish sphere, and strove to control grain transport on the Weser and along the North Sea coast. The town's quarrels with the duke of Burgundy during the 1440s resulted in separate peace agreements that did not always apply to the Hanse as a whole, and indiscriminate attacks by Bremen's pirate fleet did not make it any less awkward for the rest of the Hanse to negotiate amiable relationships with England and



Holland.<sup>72</sup> The town's refusal to treat with English officials after 1465, despite Lübeck's eventual consent, speaks volumes. Though still often bound by the attitudes of the Wendish group, Hamburg also asserted herself in opposition to Lübeck, and prospered through a flourishing trade with England and the Lowlands, and monopolistic ordinances relating particularly to the traffic in cereals.<sup>73</sup> Far to the northeast, Reval and Riga severely restricted access to the Livonian hinterland, and monopolized Hanseatic trade with the Russians at the Novgorod emporium. Finally, Danzig, aided by the demise of the Teutonic Order, had succeeded in dominating the trade of the Vistula and the Prusso-Polish interior, and now was the primary supplier of bulk raw materials to England and points along the Atlantic seaboard. These rising civic and regional powers each enforced their own trade regulations, not only against foreigners, but often against other non-resident Hansards as well.<sup>74</sup>

The most obtrusive challenge to the Hanse's raison d'être culminated with Cologne's response to the release of her merchants in England in the summer of 1468. The town thanked King Edward for his consideration, and advised Cologners not to lend money to other affected merchants of the Hanse or become involved in the conflict

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<sup>72</sup> J. Müller, "Handel und Verkehr Bremens im Mittelalter", Bremisches Jahrbuch, XXX (1927), 48-49; HR. (2) V no. 319.

<sup>73</sup> E. Pitz, ed., Die Zolltarife der Stadt Hamburg. (Wiesbaden, 1961), no. 57-59; LUB. X no. 425, 439.

<sup>74</sup> The ordinances and staple regulations of these Hanseatic towns are reviewed in U. Stein, Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Hanse. (Giessen, 1900), 41-43, 123-41. For Riga see G. Hollihn, "Die Stapel-und Gästepolitik Rigas in der Ordenzeit 1201-1561", HGBll. LX (1935), particularly 113-36 and 165-76, and also HR. (2) IV no. 758, 764-68. For Hamburg, E. Pitz, op. cit., and Hamburgische Bursprachen 1346-1594. ed. J. Bollard, (Hamburg, 1960), II 15/1, 17/5, 17/34, 22/1, 24/1-2, 42/16-17, 45/6, 54/5, 54/31, 57/16. See also M. Malowist, "Poland, Russia and Western Trade in the Fifteenth Century", Past and Present, XIII (1958), 26-41; LUB. XI no. 368.

in any way.<sup>75</sup> Cologners duly assumed absolute control of the Steelyard, and for the next half decade England and the rest of the Hanse were embroiled in a sea war, perhaps a predictable, if not inevitable result of more than half a century of intense controversy.

In England a succession of insecure monarchies in the fifteenth century had done little positive to affect the demeanor of the maritime trading community, and the violence that marked the deterioration of Anglo-Hanseatic relations throughout the middle decades was symptomatic of acute political weakness within the Realm. The war-like proclivities of the English did not stem entirely from the quest for commercial parity in Hanseatic territories. In London, English merchants were more interested in restricting or even revoking the fiscal privileges of their Hanseatic rivals than in achieving parity in Prussia for their colleagues from the east coast ports. In this context the anti-Hanse agitation in England can be seen, at least in part, as a struggle for more equitable application of royal customs and subsidies, whereby the Hansards would forfeit their advantage, particularly in the highly competitive cloth export trade. English merchant adventurers trading abroad reinforced anti-Hanse sentiment with often legitimate complaints of exclusion from, or persecution in the Baltic region. But their arguments were offset as often as not by the epidemic of piracy for which the merchant community itself was largely responsible, and which the century of intermittent conflict with France had encouraged. During the middle decades the emergence of powerful mercantile interest groups schooled in commercial violence combined with a belligerent aristocracy to challenge further the authority of a government already handicapped by political

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<sup>75</sup> HUB. IX no. 491, 519; HR. (2) VI no. 100, 114-15, 164; HA Köln Hanse Urkunden U2/51.

turmoil and a perpetually exhausted treasury. It was hardly mere coincidence, for example, that Thomas Kent was among those appointed to investigate Warwick's attack on the Hanseatic salt fleet in 1458.<sup>74</sup>

Under Edward IV, provisos attached to the renewal of Hanseatic charters had led to an important delineation of key Hanseatic interest groups trading to England, and induced the Hansards to agree to reopen discussions that included the issue of reciprocity. Coupled with a policy of conciliation with Denmark and the new duke of Burgundy, this had laid the foundation for what might have been a gradual though significant eastern expansion of English mercantile interests. But this initiative too had been undone by a wantonly violent foray into Iceland, which immediately wrecked the Anglo-Danish peace. And the depredations that followed at Helsingor, in themselves no more cowardly or illegal than those that precipitated them, provided a pretext for continued reprisals. The subsequent escalation of hostilities ushered in another critical phase in the Anglo-Hanseatic legacy of conflict.

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<sup>74</sup> Foedera. XI 415-16.



#### IV THE HANSEATIC TRADE IN ENGLAND 1450-1468

##### Hansards in England

Anglo-Hanseatic economic links and their integral place within the commercial framework of fifteenth century Europe were dependent not only on monopolies within the commodity structure, but also to a significant extent on the exceptional, if not unique legal status of Hanseatic merchants in England. The intrinsic economic importance of the liberties they enjoyed there, together with the absence of corresponding benefits for their English counterparts in Hanseatic territory are central to any evaluation of the Anglo-Hanseatic trade.

Most of the major Hanseatic privileges in England were based on charters granted in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century, which were reconfirmed throughout the late medieval period, so that by the mid-fifteenth century a series of fundamental rights had become firmly entrenched.<sup>1</sup> They were the basis, in part, for the substantial Hanseatic presence in England, as well as the source of endless frustration for English competitors.

At least as early as 1260 German merchants had maintained a house in London, later known as the Guildhalla Teutonicorum or Steelyard, where jurisdiction over their fellowship was assured through the election of their own aldermen. Moreover, they could plead special cases of mercantile law before an English alderman chosen

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<sup>1</sup> StA Hamburg Senat C1 VI no. 2 vol. 6 Fasc. 7 Ino 1a. The following is intended only as a brief introduction to some of the major Hanseatic liberties in England, illustrative of the Hansards' economic advantage over their English rivals. A recent and somewhat more detailed assessment of the early history of English customs legislation and the privileges of the Hanse is contained in T.H. Lloyd, Alien Merchants in England in the High Middle Ages. (Brighton, 1982), 22-34, 129-39.

from the livery of London, if sheriffs and bailiffs failed to administer prompt justice. The Hansards, then, were not subject to English hosting regulations, but instead enjoyed a high degree of autonomy. They were free to move throughout the kingdom and to buy or sell wholesale, and were entitled to conclude commercial transactions with foreign and native merchants alike. Finally, they were favoured with preferential rates in royal customs and subsidies, and exemptions from any new duties introduced by the central government or local authorities.<sup>2</sup> By contrast, despite the apparent agreement of 1437, protectionist staple regulations in Hanseatic towns, particularly in the Baltic, offered no preferential franchises for Englishmen. Merchant adventurers attempting to forge links with interior wholesale markets were actively obstructed.

In England the main economic advantage of the Hansards stemmed from differential duties charged by the Crown on both imported merchandise and English woollen cloth. The tax on broadcloths<sup>3</sup> did not vary, however it was different for native merchants, Hansards, and other aliens. The rates that applied to Hansards in the fifteenth century were unchanged since the time of Edward II. The highest tariffs applied to cloths "in grain", coloured with expensive scarlet dye from the Mediterranean. Next came the "half grain" or "part grain" varieties, dyed only partially with grain. The majority of England's cloth exports, however, were those without grain, dyed instead with cheaper colourants such as

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The English standard of measurement was the "cloth of assize" or "broadcloth", a double-width cloth twenty-four yards long and two yards wide. Shorter and narrower cloths also were exported, but were converted to cloth of assize equivalents for customs calculations. E.M. Carus-Wilson and O. Coleman, England's Export Trade 1257-1547. (Oxford, 1963), 13; G.P.H. Chorley, "The English Assize of Cloth", Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, LIX (1986), 125-30.



madder. Together with raw wool they constituted the mainstay of eastern England's export trade.<sup>4</sup> Hansards paid a duty of 2s. on every cloth of scarlet dyed in grain (in grano), 18d. on cloth in part grain (dimidio grano), and 12d. on each cloth without grain (sine grano). Several cheaper varieties of cloth like russets, straights, and frieses were catagorized with miscellaneous merchandise paying the ad valorem poundage subsidy and the 3d. custom. Worsteds, though they were of little importance in the Hanseatic trade, were assessed by the piece according to specific rates.<sup>5</sup>

Most other commodities, both imported and exported, were assessed ad valorem. The poundage subsidy of 12d. on the pound sterling applied to the merchandise of denizens - English subjects or foreign-born merchants privileged to pay customs at native rates - and aliens, but not normally to that of Hansards.<sup>6</sup> The petty custom of 3d. on the pound was paid by alien merchants, including Hansards, while denizens were exempt. Originally, the merchants or their appointed agents presented certificates or made oral declarations attesting to the value of their goods.<sup>7</sup> But the minimal fluctuation in values

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<sup>4</sup> E.M. Carus-Wilson and O. Coleman, op. cit., 14-15.

<sup>5</sup> For worsted rates: Ibid., 199.

<sup>6</sup> Poundage was first levied by order of Council in 1347, and year by year following, by agreement with merchants. From 1373 it took the form of a parliamentary grant to the king for the keeping of the seas and support of a navy. However, most of the revenues were spent on the wars in France. The introduction of the poundage subsidy post-dated the charters which excused Hansards from paying any new duties. See N.S.B. Gras, The Early English Customs System. (Cambridge, Mass., 1918), 112; Studies, 360, and M. Oppenheim, A History of the Administration of the Royal Navy. (Hamden, Conn., 1961), 10. The suggestion made by E.M. Carus-Wilson and O. Coleman in England's Export Trade 1257-1547. (Oxford, 1963), 7, that except for wine, other imports are "inextricably mixed with miscellaneous exports, since all were subject to poundage", is misleading. Poundage was not normally paid by Hansards, except when relations with the Crown were extremely strained, and wax - a principal Hanseatic import - was not subject to poundage charges.

<sup>7</sup> StA Hamburgo Senat C1 VI no. 2 vol. 6 Fasc. 7 Ino 1a, 7-8.



entered in the particulars of customs accounts during the fifteenth century points to an established system of standardized rates. Goods were consistently under-valued for customs purposes, and the worth given in the particulars bore little relation to actual market prices.

Separate fixed duties applied to exports of leather and hides, as well as to wool and woolfells. However, these latter commodities were not of central importance to the Anglo-Hanseatic trade. Wax was far more significant, as Hansards were the principal foreign suppliers. The charge was one shilling on every hundredweight (quintal) valued at 40s. Finally, the tunnage subsidy of 3s. per tun of wine and 6s. per tun of sweet wine was paid by all Hanseatic and alien merchants.<sup>8</sup>

The application of differential ad valorem customs and subsidy rates can be illustrated with any of the common bulk commodities brought to England by Hanseatic, alien and denizen merchants. The example of pitch and tar, valued consistently at 20s. per last throughout the second half of the fifteenth century, is typical. A Hansard freighting a last of pitch or tar would pay a petty custom charge amounting to 3d., while a denizen would be required to pay 12d. poundage on the same item. Other aliens would be charged both the custom and the subsidy for a total of 15d. A like distinction can be drawn for cloth exports. A standard broadcloth without grain, regardless of its true retail value, would be subject to a 12d. customs charge if it were shipped by a Hansard, but 14d. if it belonged to a denizen merchant. For non-Hanseatic aliens the normal rate was 2s. 9d. per

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 6-7; PRO. E356/21-24. Tunnage was also a parliamentary subsidy, usually granted together with poundage, although a form of this duty on wine dates to the thirteenth century. See Select Cases in the Exchequer Chamber 1377-1461. ed. M. Kemmant, Publications of the Selden Society LI (1933), 27; Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council. ed. N.H. Nicolas, (London, 1834), III 110-12, 117; Rot. Parl. V 173, 228ff.; Studies. 361, note 10.

cloth. The special considerations enjoyed by Hansards originally applied to most other alien merchant groups in England as well.<sup>9</sup> It was the Hansards, however, who had actively and successfully defended their privileges on into the fifteenth century. By then, when the usual tariffs were in effect, the apparent advantage of the Hanseatic merchants was not inconsiderable.

To facilitate a diversified and voluminous trade over long distances Hansards and Englishmen alike were represented by business agents and attorneys in distant towns and foreign lands. A single agent might serve several merchants, and likewise an individual merchant might employ any number of factors. It was not uncommon for the younger sons of great trading families to begin their careers abroad as messengers and factors, before assuming fuller responsibility for some particular branch of family business interests. This certainly was true of Cologne families trading to London. Cologners alone had twenty-six factors at the Steelyard in 1468, including Peter and Johann Bodenclop, sons and factors of Peter the elder, and Johann van Ae's son and factor, Johann the younger.<sup>10</sup>

In England's east coast ports responsibility for the disposal of Hanseatic cargoes most often rested with the ships' captains and a handful of resident Hanseatic factors. Actual ownership, however, was another matter. At Lynn, for instance, all the Hanseatic goods discharged and re-freighted during 1467-68 were customed to a total of only six Hansards, including the shippers themselves. Yet, after the Hanseatic vessels were impounded there in the summer of 1468, more than a dozen other Esterlings claimed shares in the confiscated cargoes. From

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<sup>9</sup> StA Hamburg Senat C1 VI no. 2 vol. 6 Fasc. 7 Ino 1a; HUB, II no. 31.

<sup>10</sup> HUB, IX no. 491.

contemporary Danzig records it is apparent that most of these merchants were part of a nucleus of prominent Danzigers with specialized Atlantic-based commercial links. Shipper Paul Roole provides a good illustration of this facet of the trade. The merchandise he brought to Lynn in May 1468 was customed only to himself and one Hans van Plauen. When Roole unwittingly returned in August, with a cargo he shared jointly with indigenous merchant Simon Pigot, van Plauen and two other Hanseatic factors had been gaoled. But itemized claims compiled later reveal that at least nine other Danzigers owned goods in the ship. Of this group, the only Hansard definitely in England at the time was Hans Barenbrock, who was arrested at the Steelyard in London. The situation was no different at Hull. Cargo brought there by Danzig shipper Eler Bokelman, and valued in excess of £250, was entered under the name of Bokelman, four other Hansards and two aliens. Subsequent claims indicate it was owned, in fact, by no fewer than twelve other Hansards, most of whom were Danzigers.<sup>11</sup>

Business partnerships within the Hanseatic community often comprised of kinsmen jointly involved in mercantile enterprise, but also included temporary contractual relationships with colleagues, ships' masters or, as was common in the grain and timber producing regions of the Prusso-Polish hinterland, with members of the landed gentry. Such trading associations specialized to some extent in specific commodities, but usually were linked also to particular routes or markets within the broader trade network. Danzigers, for instance, periodically combined their resources with merchants from Lübeck and

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<sup>11</sup> PRO. E122 97/9, 62/11; HUB. IX no. 541. Some of the prominent Danzigers included Peter Schomaker, Tews Pelz, Gregor van Ruden, Hans Overram, Martin Buck, Jacob Wulff, Hans Wise, Hans Aptshagen, Tideman Bye, Hans Volker, and Laurence Ecke, all of whom are mentioned frequently in the Danzig toll books for the 1460s. NAPG. 300.19/1,3.



Hamburg for ventures in England, Scotland and Scandinavia, while the dispersion of Cologne's trade fostered the creation of associations in London and throughout the Lowlands. That town's Englandfahrer formed their own fellowship known as the Gaffel Windeck.<sup>12</sup>

It was forbidden for Hanseatic merchants to form partnerships with Englishmen, and there were, of course, safeguards against the fraudulent acquisition of Hanseatic privileges in England. In 1447 the Hanse decreed that any non-Hansard who purchased citizenship of a Hanseatic town either had to own a house and property there, or else be a citizen for at least seven years in order to qualify for Hanseatic status in England. However, a policy introduced by the London comptoir in the late 1450s, requiring all factors and servants to be born citizens of Hanseatic towns, failed to secure the necessary approval of the rest of the Hanseatic membership.<sup>13</sup>

The English export trade of the mid-fifteenth century relied almost exclusively on wool and woollen cloth. "Oute of dyverse londes fer byyond the see" foreign merchants came to England, "To have thyse merchaundyss into theyr contré".<sup>14</sup> However, except by special licence, almost all English wool exports reached continental markets via the Calais staple, where the trade was monopolized by English staplers.<sup>15</sup> The Hanseatic role was not significant. But aside from raw wool and woolfells, England exported little else except textiles.

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<sup>12</sup> HUB. X no. 784.

<sup>13</sup> HUB. VIII no. 296, 299, 300, 302, 319, 344, 534, 1047; HR. (2) III no. 288#72-73, V no. 263#48, 712#8,13.

<sup>14</sup> "On England's Commercial Policy", Political Poems and Songs relating to English History, ed. T. Wright, (London, 1861), II 282.

<sup>15</sup> For the trade in English wool see E. Power, "The Wool Trade in the Fifteenth Century", Studies. 39-90.

Some hides and tin were exported from the east coast ports, and fragmentary customs records indicate occasional shipments of barley and corn from Lynn in the 1450s and 1460s, as well as some lead exports from Hull.<sup>16</sup> But woollen cloth unquestionably was the lifeblood of the English export trade. Hansards, moreover, were among the most important foreign buyers.

England produced and exported a wide range of woollen cloths, from heavy double worsteds and finished broadcloths to coarser and cheaper varieties such as kerseys, straights, frieses, and stockbreds. They were identified according to colour, type, and place of manufacture. In the Baltic, for instance, woollens from London, Lynn, Colchester, Beverley and Norwich were distinguished from simple "English" cloths and kerseys.<sup>17</sup> In 1453 a small pack of English cloth sent to Danzig by a Hanseatic merchant contained "4 Colcister blo und eyn gro". Another cargo belonging to Steelyard merchants in 1460 included "unus pannus grisei dimidius, dimidius viridis et dimidius blavei coloris...4 montravalyr" (after the fine greys of Montivilliers), in addition to frieses, stockbreds and "unus medius pannus viridis musculati coloris".<sup>18</sup> The weaving of woollens was widely dispersed throughout England, though much of the cloth manufactured for the export market came from Yorkshire, Gloucestershire, Coventry, London and East Anglia. Merchants of the Steelyard, or for that matter anyone

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<sup>16</sup> CPR. 1436-1441. 485; CPR. 1446-1452. 380; PRO. E122 9/68, 52/42-45, 61/71, 62/7,10, 96/37,40, 97/6,7,9, 194/11.

<sup>17</sup> W. Stein, "Handelsbriefe aus Riga und Königsberg von 1458 und 1461", H6b11., IX (1898), letter 27; T. Hirsch, Danzigs Handels-und Gewerbsgeschichte unter der Herrschaft des Deutschen Ordens. (Stuttgart, 1969), 251-53.

<sup>18</sup> HUB. VIII no. 244; B. Kuske, Quellen. II no. 243. For the English cloth manufacturing industry: J.M. Bolton, The Medieval English Economy 1150-1500. (London, 1980), 267-73; K.G. Ponting, The Woollen Industry of South-west England. (Bath, 1971), 1-30, and H. Heaton, The Yorkshire Woollen and Worsted Industries. (Oxford, 1920).



exporting textiles from the capital, undoubtedly purchased a good deal of their cloth directly or by sample at London's main woollen exchange, Blackwell Hall, where clothmakers from diverse areas of England wholesaled their wares.

It was common for exporters to buy cloth on credit in London, and at least some bills were payable in Flemish money at Bruges or the fairs in Bergen op Zoom and Antwerp. A record of outstanding loans in London's Dowgate ward, where the Steelyard was located, shows that in the late 1450s Hansards borrowed considerable sums of money from several prominent London mercers and drapers, presumably to finance cloth purchases. Also, in 1468 the clothmen of Gloucestershire lamented that imprisoned Hanseatic merchants owed them more than £5,000. But the Hansards also extended credit to their English associates, as records of the Mayors' Court show several cases of Hansards suing Londoners for unpaid obligations.<sup>17</sup> Certainly, too, much of the cloth bought by foreign merchants was paid for in cash or in kind, and some of it was made to order. In 1458, for example, Thomas Perevell of East Bergholt was commissioned to make four "vesses" and two "new greys" for Cologne merchant Everhard Kryt.<sup>20</sup>

The traffic in English woollens, therefore, was an integral part of the Anglo-Hanseatic trade structure. Published totals from the extant Exchequer customs enrolments, used previously by H.L. Gray in a study of English exports, provide some indication of the volume

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<sup>19</sup> S. Jenks, op. cit.; HUB. IX no. 525; HA Köln Hanse Urkunden U2/133; CLRO. MC1/3/192, 200, 209, 214, 224, 225, 235, 236, 241, 244, 347, 364, MC1/3A/1, 48, 67, 113, 116-18, 136, 210-12, 263.

<sup>20</sup> R.H. Britnell, Growth and Decline in Colchester, 1300-1525. (Cambridge, 1986), 72-73, citing Colchester borough court rolls.



and distribution of the trade.<sup>21</sup> The export figures verify that the English cloth trade already was depressed well before the disputes with the Hanseatic towns erupted into open conflict. Renewed fighting in France from 1448 to 1453 and civil strife in England a decade later contributed to the decline, reducing yearly volume to about 75% of the pre-1448 level. Throughout the 1450s and 1460s Hansards exported about 8,600 broadcloths each year from England. Occasionally small quantities were customed for shipment from Southampton and Bristol, as well as from Sandwich and Yarmouth in the early 1460s, but aside from these rare instances, the Hanseatic cloth trade, at least insofar as it is reflected in customs returns, was concentrated almost entirely at Hull, Ipswich, Lynn, Boston, and especially London.

An assessment of the character and importance of the Hanse's trade with England in the mid-fifteenth century cannot, however, be based exclusively on fluctuations or trends in English woollen exports, which were but one facet of a much larger and more intricate system of trade. Aside from the wool trade, exports to overseas markets were not so vital to many of England's east coast towns as the flourishing coastal traffic. Newcastle, for example, sent coal, lead, salt and salmon southward to London and the East Anglian ports, whence it could be reshipped. The ports of Yarmouth and Lynn sent herring and grain to the northeast. The foreign trade of London created a demand for extra tonnage, and thus provided employment for coastal vessels, while the herring fisheries off Yorkshire, south Lincolnshire and Norfolk continued to prosper also.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> E.M. Carus-Wilson and O. Coleman, England's Export Trade 1257-1547. (Oxford, 1963) and H.L. Gray, "English Foreign Trade from 1446 to 1482", Studies. 1ff.

<sup>22</sup> G.V. Scannell, "English Merchant Shipping at the end of the Middle Ages", ECHR., 2nd series XIII (1961), 328-31; H. Clarke, "King's Lynn and east coast (Footnote Continued)

The Hanseatic trade in England becomes clearer, then, if the distinction is drawn between the local economies of the eastern coastal towns and that of southern England and London, which commanded the greatest share of England's cloth exports. The woollen trade, centred in the capital and served by cross-Channel shipping to the Lowlands, attracted many Hansards, and especially the merchants of Cologne. But the business of importing products into other parts of England was not dictated by the cloth trade. In East Anglia and ports to the north like Hull and Newcastle, the exportation of English woollens by Hanseatic merchants usually was incidental to the importation of commodities particularly from the Baltic. The Esterlings came to these areas not primarily as buyers of cloth, but rather as sellers of the timber, iron and naval supplies essential to eastern England's fishing and ship-building industries and the coastal trade.

The Hanse's export trade to England was very diversified, but of central importance was the Danzig staple, which supplied the bulk commodities of the Prussian and Lithuanian hinterland. Wood and byproducts of the lumber industry were in fairly constant demand in England, both for domestic building purposes and ship construction. Ashes, used for dyeing cloth and for the manufacture of soap, also were imported, primarily from Danzig, as were large quantities of Swedish bog iron called osmund. Other Baltic products included grain, peltware, canvas, cable and cordage, various other naval supplies, bowstaves, and assorted finished articles like tables, counters and cutting boards. Westphalia and the Lowlands, on the other hand, contributed textiles and a

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(Footnote Continued)

trade in the Middle Ages", Medieval Archaeology, ed. D.J. Blackman, (London, 1973), 277-90; D. Burwash, English Merchant Shipping 1460-1540, (Toronto, 1947), 151-58; P. Heath, "North Sea Fishing in the Fifteenth Century : The Scarborough Fleet", Northern History, III (1968), 53-69.

variety of manufactured wares, while merchants from Cologne, who were concentrated in London and Ipswich, offered steel, linen, thread, dyestuffs, and a wide range of other products from the Rhineland and southern Europe. This basic commodity structure illustrates another fundamental distinction between England's Baltic trade links and those with Westphalia and the lower Rhineland.

The importance of low-value bulk forest products in the Baltic export trade is apparent from extant Danzig toll records, and corresponding English sources show that Danzig ships arriving in England during the 1450s and 1460s almost invariably off-loaded cargoes of lumber, pitch and tar.<sup>23</sup> In addition, the key role of the Danzig staple as a distribution centre for hemp, flax, yarn and iron enhanced even further its importance within the Anglo-Hanseatic trade structure. Despite temporarily depressed wood prices in England in 1450, a business agent of the Order could confidently report that "ouch ist in Prussen und kumpt us Prussen di meiste war di si hir in desen landen [England] durffen".<sup>24</sup>

Merchants from Lübeck, Hamburg, Westphalia and Cologne also participated in the redistribution of bulk commodities, either directly from the Baltic, or via Hamburg, Amsterdam, Antwerp or the ports of Zealand. On occasion Cologners even used English carriers to freight their cargoes from Danzig. However, the English trade of merchants from Westphalia and the lower Rhineland was generally more concentrated in high-value, low-bulk manufactured wares. To England they brought costly silk, linen, thread and buckram, Osnabrück cloth, fustain from Augsburg and Ulm, and fine steel from Siegerland. Other

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<sup>23</sup> WAPG. 300.19/1,3; PRO. E122 particulars of accounts for Hull, Boston, Lynn, Ipswich, and London.

<sup>24</sup> HR. (2) III no. 669.



significant Hanseatic imports included dyestuffs, wire, furs and wine.<sup>23</sup>

The petty custom of 3d. on the pound applied to virtually all Hanseatic imports into England save wax and wine, as well as to most exports other than worsteds and broadcloths, and Exchequer enrolments record the annual totals for the value of all non-denizen merchandise subject to this ad valorem tariff. Although corresponding particulars of accounts are too fragmentary to permit a precise evaluation of the Hanseatic share in the alien trade of English ports over the long term, some delineation for shorter periods is possible. Together with totals for woollen exports, which do distinguish Hanseatic shipments from others, the petty custom totals (already published for years up to 1482) shed much light on the character and volume of trade in individual ports throughout the second half of the fifteenth century.<sup>24</sup>

During the eighteen-year period from Michaelmas 1449 to November 1467 woollen exports from the port of Lynn totaled 10,353 cloths. The average yearly volume was about 575, though annual totals for the second half of the period decreased significantly. The Hanse's share in this admittedly marginal trade varied, but accounted for approximately 23% of the aggregate and averaged 132

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<sup>23</sup> B. Kuske, Quellen. I no. 1169, II no. 393; PRO. E122 particulars of accounts; F. Irsigler, Die wirtschaftliche Stellung der Stadt Köln im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert. (Wiesbaden, 1979), 60-61, 184-200.

<sup>24</sup> Pre-1483 petty custom figures are printed in Studies. 330-60. Post-1482 totals for Lynn, Ipswich, Hull, Newcastle, and Boston are appended to this study. See Appendix A.1.1 and also A.1.3. There are some discrepancies in the cloth export figures in Studies. and those compiled by E.M. Carus-Wilson and O. Coleman in England's Export Trade 1257-1547. The calculations which follow are based on the figures given in Studies. 330-60. The published totals are not usually representative of calendar years, but rather of Exchequer years running from Michaelmas to Michaelmas (sic. 1450 = 29.09.1449 to 29.09.1450). However, totals and percentages have been computed here for the period Michaelmas 1449 to Michaelmas 1467, rather than for individual years, because although some annual totals do not correspond to Exchequer years, they are, unless noted, continuous without major gaps.

cloths annually. The remainder was in the hands of denizen traders. Other alien merchants played no significant role. In the fiscal year 1467-68 Lynn's exports peaked at 963 cloths. The Hanseatic share plummeted to a mere 5%, while the 911 cloths exported by native merchants represented well over double the annual average for denizens. All of this denizen cloth was freighted in the English ships seized at Helsingor en route to the Baltic.

In the same eighteen years prior to the autumn of 1467 the value of merchandise paying the petty custom at Lynn was £13,689. This would mean an annual average of about £740. Particulars of accounts are not continuous for the entire period, but do survive for certain years. A nineteen-month stretch ending in January 1457 saw Hansards account for 39% of almost £1,700 worth of alien merchandise customed at Lynn, and in a two year span from Michaelmas 1459 to November 1461 they owned 62% of slightly more than £2,000 worth of goods. One final example, the account for 1467-68, shows a below average 3d. custom total of only £497 worth of goods, with Hansards still accounting for 62%. For these last two example periods imports and exports are easily distinguishable. Merchandise imported into Lynn by Hansards was valued at £1,245, while exports, except for broadcloths and worsteds not subject to the petty custom, were worth less than £100. The vast majority of Hanseatic cargoes were carried to Lynn by Danzig ships.<sup>27</sup>

In neighbouring Boston there also were significant fluctuations in annual woollen exports and 3d. custom totals. In a nine-year span beginning at Michaelmas 1449 denizens exported 2,061 cloths. The Hansards' total was 966, although they shipped no cloth from Boston between

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<sup>27</sup> Appendix A.1.1; Studies. 348; PRO. E122 96/37,40,41, 97/1-4,6-9, E356/21.



September 1450 and Michaelmas 1454. During the same nine years the sum value of merchandise paying the petty custom was £4,843. Again, however, a yearly average of £538 is entirely unrepresentative, since less than £900 worth of alien goods was exchanged during the first five years of this period. This in itself represents a drastic reduction in the value of the alien trade to less than 9% of what it had been during the preceding five years, and is no doubt partly attributable to strained relations with Lübeck, and the absence of the Wendish Bergenfahrer from Boston in the early 1450s. The Bergenfahrer, primarily Lübeckers and Hansards from the other Wendish ports, controlled the Norwegian cod fisheries through the Hanseatic comptoir at Bergen. The distributive fish trade with England and, hence, Lübeck's central interest there, was concentrated largely at Boston, although English dependency on the Bergen comptoir was circumvented periodically through direct trade, by licence, to Iceland.<sup>20</sup>

A gap in Boston's customs records occurs in the late 1450s, but figures are complete for roughly eight successive Exchequer years up to October 1467. Woollen exports totaled about 4,428 cloths, and Hansards accounted for 63% of the trade. The Hanseatic portion of the annual total had fallen to under 10% in 1467-68, and at least 344 of the 576 cloths shipped abroad that year by native merchants were confiscated aboard English vessels at the Sound.

The post-1459 period also saw the alien trade in miscellaneous merchandise recover to an average annual value of £932, and again the importance of the Bergenfahrer is apparent. In the first twenty-two months

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<sup>20</sup> CPR. 1446-1452. 156, 430; Calendar of French Rolls - Henry VI : 48th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, appendix 2. (London, 1887), 385, 386, 395, 405, 408, 427, 437, 438, 441, 442, 448, 449.



of this period £1,583 worth of Hanseatic merchandise was exchanged at Boston, representing 90% of the alien total. Moreover, £1,000 worth of the Hanseatic goods consisted of fish cargoes imported by the Bergenfahrer in ships from Stralsund and Danzig. A similar pattern continued on the eve of the Anglo-Hanseatic conflict. From March 1467 to March 1468 the value of alien goods was only £452, but the Hanseatic share was still a full 72%, and included fish imports worth £200. Hanseatic vessels usually carried the large cargoes of fish and bulk raw materials to Boston, though Hansards employed some alien shipping as well, and occasionally exported small quantities of grain from the port.<sup>27</sup>

In the northeast, Hull customs records, which also incorporate totals from Scarborough, indicate a decline in the cloth trade during the 1460s. From 1458 through 1467 fewer than 10,000 broadcloths were exported from Hull, though twice that number were shipped during the previous nine years. While annual Hanseatic exports declined slightly, those of denizens were halved. Despite this marked decline in overall volume, the cloth trade from Hull continued to be controlled by the denizen merchant community. For the entire eighteen-year period Hansards accounted for only 9% of Hull's cloth exports, and the share of other aliens was negligible. Most of the Hanseatic cloth was freighted in Danzig ships. As in other east coast ports, total exports recovered temporarily in 1467-68 to 1,633 cloths, while the Hansards accounted for 11%. Again, a substantial portion of the denizen woollen exports, belonging to merchants from York

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<sup>27</sup> Appendix A.1.1; Studies. 331; PRO. E122 9/53,54,56,59,65,68, 10/1,4,6-10, E356/21. There is a gap in the enrolments from Michaelmas 1458 to 5th December 1459. For the seizures at Helsingor see HUB. IX no. 519#12-14. Lübeckers were still freighting goods from Danzig to England in early 1462, using Danzig skippers. LUB. X no. 124.

and Hull, were confiscated on the way to the Baltic in the summer of 1468.

The port of Hull, where £18,544 worth of alien merchandise was exchanged between December 1449 and Michaelmas 1467, was important for both coastal and overseas commerce. Ships from Flanders and ports in Zealand called there regularly, as did others from London, Dartmouth, North Berwick and Leith. The Hanseatic trade, however, had a distinctly Baltic focus. Four Danzig ships called at Hull in the summer of 1453, and a decade later, when petty custom merchandise was valued at slightly less than £2,000, three Hanseatic vessels, all from Danzig, off-loaded cargoes worth £645. In the fiscal year 1464-65 three Danzig ships delivered £454 worth of Hanseatic goods, representing 44% of the alien total. Aside from cloth, Hanseatic exports for that year consisted of a small grain cargo valued at less than £5. Two years later the £249 worth of Hanseatic goods exchanged at Hull represented only 24% of the alien total, but included £40 worth of lead exports. Most of the bulk imports, as well as the lead cargo, were freighted by Danzig shipper Derick Schach, although Hamburg shipper Claus Scult also delivered a consignment of pitch, tar and boards. The following summer both of the Hanseatic ships arrested at Hull had arrived from Danzig, and perhaps a third already had cleared the port when the others were impounded.<sup>30</sup>

In contrast to Hull and the ports of the Wash, where Baltic merchants were the key Hanseatic participants in

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<sup>30</sup> Appendix A.1.1; Studies. 342; PRO. E122 61/71,75, 61/1,3-10, E356/21. There is a gap in the enrolled customs figures from 12th August 1460 to 11th April 1461. For the English ships taken in 1468 and the subsequent arrests at Hull see HUB. IX no. 519, 520, 541. For the trade in raw iron: W. Childs, "England's Iron Trade in the Fifteenth Century", ECHR, 2nd series XXXIV (1981), 34. The Hansards also traded to Newcastle on a regular basis, but customs records for the 1450s and 1460s are too fragmentary to permit a quantitative evaluation.

the woollen trade, the greater share of cloth exports from Ipswich belonged to Cologne merchants of the London Steelyard. In 1458-59, for example, Cologners and their agents shipped at least two thirds of the Hanseatic total. Other Hansards active in the Ipswich woollen trade came from Lübeck, Hamburg, Duisburg and Nijmegen, and were resident in London. Non-Hanseatic aliens were of comparatively minor importance in the overseas traffic in cloth from Ipswich or from neighbouring Colchester, whence much of the cloth was actually shipped. For customs purposes the port of Colchester came under the jurisdiction of the collectors at Ipswich. From mid-summer 1449 until Michaelmas 1467 almost 38,000 cloths were exported from Ipswich/Colchester - an average of slightly more than 2,100 per year - and Hansards shipped 72% of the total. Many of their exports left port in English or other non-Hanseatic vessels bound for the Lowlands. Though an annual average for denizens would be 572 cloths, actual exports exceeded 500 units in only two years after 1458. The Hanseatic volume of about 1,500 was maintained more consistently, except for a sharp variation at the end of the period. The Hanseatic total of 4,500 cloths shipped in 1465-66 fell to just 606 the following year, and was only 852 the year after that (in 1467-68), when the ports' aggregate output stood at less than 1,400 units.

During the 1449-1467 period the value of miscellanea exchanged at Ipswich/Colchester by non-denizens averaged £2,211 per year for a total of almost £40,000. The collector of the petty custom for the fiscal year 1458-59 recorded goods with an aggregate value of only £1,375, but Hanseatic merchandise nonetheless accounted for 80%. In 1465-66, when Hansards were responsible for 95% of the ports' broadcloth exports, they also owned 86% of the £3,148 worth of merchandise paying the 3d. custom. The value of customed Hanseatic imports that year was £2,534, while exports were worth only £172. Much of the bulk cargo, plus twenty-nine quintals of wax not subject to



the petty custom, was imported into Ipswich for merchants from Hamburg.<sup>31</sup>

Cloth exports from London far surpassed those of any other port in the kingdom. From March 1450 until Michaelmas 1467 more than 284,000 cloths were customed for export from the capital. Half of them belonged to denizens, but 41% were Hanseatic. The last nine years of this period saw a trend toward slight growth in the total volume, largely attributable to a modest increase in denizen and alien shipments. In 1467-68, though, while the Hanseatic total of 6,437 cloths was consistent with the yearly average, denizen and alien totals doubled to 15,052 and 3,986 respectively. Yet, while customs returns clearly illustrate London's dominance as the hub of southern England's cloth export trade, they cannot be taken as an accurate reflection of the overall volume of shipping and subsidiary activity. Large consignments of woollens customed in London could be and were carted to Dover for shipment overseas,<sup>32</sup> and cargoes from London likely were shipped from other ports in Kent, Essex and Suffolk as well. Imported goods destined for London, on the other hand, were customed at port of entry and their values therefore are absorbed in petty custom and poundage figures for Sandwich and perhaps Ipswich.

The most active Hanseatic dealers in English woollens were the merchants of Cologne, though the Steelyard community also included traders from Dinant, Nijmegen and Duisburg, the Westphalian towns of Soest, Münster and Dortmund, and Esterlings from Danzig, Lübeck and Hamburg. They employed Baltic carriers as well as English and foreign vessels making regular crossings to Zealand and Brabant. During the eighteen-year period

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<sup>31</sup> Appendix A.1.1; Studies. 340; PRD. E122 161/25, 52/42-49, E356/21.

<sup>32</sup> Appendix A.2.3.

ending Michaelmas 1467 almost 75% of all Hanseatic cloth exports from England originated in London, while woollen shipments from London and Ipswich/Colchester combined represented a full 93% of the Hanseatic cloth export trade. Particulars of accounts for the 1450s and 1460s are too fragmentary to provide any insight into the Hanseatic share of petty custom merchandise. Enrolments indicate that £374,418 worth of alien goods were customed at London in eighteen years commencing in March 1450, with a trend toward higher average yearly totals in the 1460s.<sup>33</sup>

In some instances it is possible to evaluate the Hanse's contribution to England's foreign trade through balances of trade, although calculations of Hanseatic balances in any English port necessarily depend upon an estimated value for cloth exports. The vast majority of Hanseatic broadcloth exports, and virtually all those from ports other than London, consisted of cloths without grain.<sup>34</sup> Under normal circumstances Hansards would pay a custom of 12d. for each cloth of this quality, irrespective of value, and usually the particulars of accounts contain only a tally of the cloths in each shipment. Occasionally, however, the poundage subsidy of 12d. on the pound apparently was charged on Hanseatic goods, including woollen exports, and values were recorded. Some Lynn and Hull accounts for the 1460s show Hanseatic cloth exports rated at £1 each, while still others for Boston and Lynn give a value of £1 6s. 8d. Later accounts for Ipswich also use this second value. Both rates found in the particulars of accounts are lower than

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<sup>33</sup> Studies. 345-46; PRO. E122 76/48, 194/11,12,15,16, E356/21.

<sup>34</sup> Even at the cloth exporting centre of Ipswich in 1465-66, Hansards shipped 2,339 cloths "sine grano", but only one whole cloth and 9 ells "in grano", together with 32 worsteds. PRO. E122 52/48.

the one used by Gray, who estimated at £2.<sup>33</sup> It must be stressed, of course, that such low valuations bear scant relation to retail values. Throughout the second half of the century some types of English cloth retailed for upwards of £3 each, but prices for diverse other commodities, including wax, dyestuffs and pitch, also were as much as double the values entered in customs particulars.<sup>34</sup> The minimum cloth values recorded by customs officials apparently are consistent, then, with those applied to other Hanseatic goods paying the petty custom. On this premise only, therefore, the second value of £1 6s. 8d. is as appropriate as any on which to base a cursory evaluation of the Hanseatic cloth export trade in years for which corresponding 3d. custom figures survive.<sup>37</sup>

To determine the combined worth of Hanseatic exports, the value of russets, frieses, coverlets and all other petty custom exports must be added. Worsteds, which paid a separate rate, were of no significance outside of London. The only significant Hanseatic imports to which separate duties applied were wax and wine. But like worsted shipments, wine cargoes off-loaded at ports other than London were negligible, and therefore do not affect trade balance calculations for the east coast ports. Wax cargoes were important, though, and values are recorded.

Estimated trade balances for various years during the pre-1468 period again mirror certain basic

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<sup>33</sup> PRO. E122 10/8, 52/54.55, 62/10, 97/3,8,9; H.L. Gray, op. cit. The enrolment for London in 1472 does show a value of £2 per cloth for woollen exports belonging to Cologners. However, the Anglo-Hanseatic trade at this time was anything but normal. PRO. E356/21 10v.

<sup>34</sup> For examples of retail prices: PRO. C1/31/495-96, C1/149/49, C1/186/66, C1/326/52; Appendix A.4.2.

<sup>37</sup> Appendix A.1.3.



characteristics of the Hanseatic trade outside of London. And again, the importance of the Baltic connections for the east coast ports is very evident. In the mid-1450s at Lynn, for example, Hanseatic export values were approximately equal to imports. But by the end of the decade, when dangers to shipping prevented English carriers from hauling bulk supplies from Danzig, and there was a decrease in the demand for English woollens in the eastern Baltic ports, the value of Hanseatic imports at Lynn exceeded exports seven-fold. Devaluation of the English pound sterling briefly stimulated cloth exports in 1464-65, so that the Hanseatic trade balance at Lynn slightly favoured exports out of the port. However, during the period from November 1465 to November 1468 the £1,230 worth of goods brought to Lynn by Hanseatic merchants would have been double the estimated value of their exports.

At Boston, where the Wendish Bergenfahrer were most active, totals varied quite radically, but there is little indication of any great discrepancy in the value of imports and exports. In twenty-two months beginning in December 1459 Hanseatic cargoes exported from Boston would have had a value of £1,767 and imports at least £1,583. For a two-year period ending in March 1467 the figures are £725 and £713 respectively. A final example, the fiscal year 1467-68, reflects the controversy of the summer of 1468. Hanseatic exports from Boston would have had an estimated value of only £134, but £324 worth of Hanseatic goods already had been off-loaded before trade was suspended in August.

The value of yearly Hanseatic imports at Hull usually exceeded that of exported wares. In 1452-53, however, Hanseatic woollen shipments totaled close to 400 cloths, and therefore the value of exported cargoes would have surpassed imports by £163. As in Lynn, totals for 1461 were drastically reduced, and in three subsequent years prior to Michaelmas 1468, for which particulars of

accounts survive, the value of imports exceeded exports. In the fiscal year 1464-65 the ratio of import to export values at Hull was 3.5 to one.

To the south, at the cloth exporting centres of Ipswich and Colchester the situation was quite different, though customs particulars provide only two sample periods. Hansards were the predominant alien importers, but Hanseatic exports from Ipswich/Colchester in 1458-59 still would have been worth £1,676 and imports less than £1,1000. In 1465-66, when Hansards shipped over 4,500 cloths, the value of exports would have surpassed imports by £3,500.

The Hanseatic trade of Ipswich/Colchester was an extension of the trade in London, although Hansards did not dominate the alien trade to such a degree in the capital. London Hansards imported a variety of merchandise into England, ranging from silk and harpstrings to raw iron, alum and wood. They shared in the long-distance carriage trade from the North Sea and Baltic ports and in the continuous traffic to and from the Lowlands, which employed alien, English, and Hanseatic carriers. Though it was not unusual for them to travel outside London or even accompany cargoes across the Channel, perhaps thirty to forty Hansards plus their servants resided in southern England on at least a semi-permanent basis. Many of their imports reached England via Bruges, Antwerp and Bergen op Zoom, while the majority of their cloth exports to the continent originated in London. From the Lowland ports cloth could be moved coastwise to Hamburg and thence to Lübeck and the Baltic or, as was the case with much of the cloth exported by Cologners, carried to the trade fairs at Frankfurt and Leipzig.

The itinerant nature of the trade of the Baltic Hansards, especially the Danzigers, is apparent from various fragmentary records of ports where cloth exports indicate a very limited or intermittent Hanseatic



presence. Danzig shipper Kersten Kosseler delivered more than £200 worth of bulk freight to Bristol in November 1467. Corresponding customs enrolments for the Exchequer year 1467-68 indicate that Hansards shipped fewer than a dozen cloths - their first woollen exports from that port in over half a decade.<sup>39</sup> At Yarmouth (sic. Blakeney, Dunwich, and Yarmouth) in 1464-65 another £200 worth of Hanseatic imports, including substantial quantities of wood, flax, pitch, tar, skins, osmund and fish oil, were customed, but again only a few cloths and a small grain consignment were exported by Hanseatic merchants.<sup>40</sup>

A microscopic illustration of the Anglo-Hanseatic commodity structure, which in turn reflects the role of the two principal Hanseatic groups in England, is provided by the customs records of Southampton for the year 1463-64. Again there is little evidence of sustained Hanseatic activity there, but Kosseler off-loaded £174 worth of Baltic cargo in 1463, wintered in England, and departed with the only Hanseatic woollen cargo for the fiscal year 1463-64 - nineteen broadcloths. In April another £240 worth of fustian and thread, belonging to Cologne merchant Johann van Bryle and likely destined for London, was brought to Southampton from the Lowlands in two Venetian galleys.<sup>41</sup>

As with Ipswich/Colchester, the foreign trade of Sandwich (sic. Dover, Sandwich) was very closely linked to that of London. Hansards, mostly Cologners from the Steelyard, exported 469 cloths in 1462-63, while their imports, which consisted primarily of fine furs and thread, were worth at least £333. Two years later, the

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<sup>39</sup> PRO. E122 19/5; Studies. 335.

<sup>39</sup> PRO. E122 152/5,7; Studies. 360.

<sup>40</sup> PRO. E122 142/2,3; Studies. 358.



minimum value of Hanseatic imports at Sandwich, including furs, dyestuffs, alum, fustian and thread, was £751, yet the Hansards had fewer than a dozen cloths customed for export. Again, Italian galleys, as well as English and other foreign vessels, were used as the carriers. In the turbulent year 1467-68 Hansards had no cloth customed for export from Sandwich and Dover, but Cologners and Westphalian merchants imported vast quantities of furs, thread and fustian valued at almost £1,700.<sup>41</sup>

The general pattern of the Hanseatic trade is, therefore, clearly discernible. At Hull, the ports of the Wash, and probably at Newcastle as well, Hanseatic merchants accounted for anywhere from one quarter to 90% of the alien trade in any given year and were the only significant non-denizen group active in the cloth export trade. Both the import and the export trade of these ports was served primarily by vessels from Danzig and Hamburg, and the Wendish Bergenfahrer also linked Boston to the Norwegian fisheries. During the 1460s the volume of the Hanseatic trade fluctuated from year to year, but severe trade imbalances evidently were the norm, except perhaps at Boston. They did occur at Hull and Lynn from the mid-1460s onward, when the aggregate value of Hanseatic imports far surpassed that of exports. In comparison to the Hansards most active in London and Ipswich/Colchester, then, the more transient Hanseatic communities in these eastern and northern ports managed what was essentially an itinerant import trade in low value bulk commodities. Aside from cloth, exports usually were confined to occasional shipments of grain, pewter, hides and lead. Hansards, therefore, exchanged their fish and bulk freight either for English cloth or for cash that could be used to buy other cargo anywhere from London to Antwerp to La Rochelle.

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<sup>41</sup> PRO. E122 128/2,8,9; Studies, 356.

## Anglo-Baltic commerce and the Bay salt trade

English customs records provide a clear indication of a strong Baltic orientation in the Hanseatic trade of ports in northern and eastern England. It is also evident from these sources that the Baltic link was, especially insofar as imports were concerned, keyed to the Prussian staple. At Danzig the principal imports consisted of salt, herring and cloth.<sup>42</sup> A main source for salt was the Bay of Bourgneuf, and the herring fisheries that supplied the Baltic region were still controlled by Hollanders and the Hansards themselves. The supply of cloth, however, was tied to the woollen industries of Flanders, Brabant, Holland, and England.

Though it dates from 1460, when Baltic commerce was disrupted by war between Poland, the Prussian towns and the Teutonic Order, the earliest surviving Danzig toll book for this period nevertheless illustrates some of the essential characteristics of the seaborne trade.<sup>43</sup> First of all, the majority of Danzig's high-value cloth imports came via Lübeck. Although cloth was the only cargo aboard four ships arriving "uth Engelant" in 1460, the quantities were small and one of the ships apparently carried no cargo at all. From the Bay and the Lowland ports only twenty-two ships reached Danzig either in ballast or laden almost exclusively with salt. It is very apparent, too, that many of the same merchants importing salt and cloth from Lübeck also shared in cargoes brought from England and the Atlantic seaboard. Occasionally these same merchants imported bulk goods from Reval and Stockholm, but they were not active in the brisk coastal traffic to and from the Wendish ports of

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<sup>42</sup> WAPG. 300.19/1,3. Also H. Samsonowicz, Untersuchungen über das Danziger Bürgerkapital in der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts. (Weimar, 1969), 33-46.

<sup>43</sup> WAPG. 300.19/1.

Rostock and Stralsund, nor in another important facet of intra-Baltic commerce, the substantial trade in Danish meat and butter. Within the port's mercantile community as a whole, however, there was wide participation in the seasonal importation of herring from Skania. The traffic in cloth and Bay salt therefore was tied to a fairly well defined core of merchants within Danzig's mercantile sector, whose trade had a distinctly western focus, with Lübeck as a major transit point. The next surviving Danzig record of seaborne imports indicates this same basic pattern again in 1468. The volume of shipping from west of the Sound had greatly increased, but many large consignments of cloth continued to reach Danzig distributors via Lübeck.<sup>44</sup>

Another crucial link in this trade is revealed in a 1465 account, which shows that most of the merchants who imported from Lübeck and beyond were heavily implicated in the exchange of salt, herring and cloth for the grain and forest products reaching Danzig via Thorn and the river Vistula.<sup>45</sup> Staple regulations restricted direct transactions between foreigners and hinterland markets. Merchants from Danzig and Thorn controlled the trade in timber and forest products by paying producers well in advance for consignments delivered in spring, when the Vistula was navigable. Debtors pledged sums to cover failure to deliver.<sup>46</sup> From northern and eastern Mazovia and Podlasia wood was floated to the Baltic via inland waterways. Some also came from Lithuania, where Kovno was an important transit centre. Baltic shipyards took a substantial portion of the timber, but great quantities

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<sup>44</sup> WAPG. 300.19/3.

<sup>45</sup> WAPG. 300.19/2.

<sup>46</sup> M. Malowist, "A certain trade technique in the Baltic Countries in the 15th-18th Centuries", Poland at the XIth International Congress of Historical Studies in Stockholm. (Warsaw, 1960), 103-12.



were shipped westward. Sawn lumber was graded according to type and quality. Particularly common in the trade to England were wainscots (Wagenschoss) - broad oaken beams or sawn planks three to five metres long, sold by the long hundred. They were used extensively in England for wall and ceiling panels, as well as for ship construction. Poorer quality oak and beechwood was cut into shorter clapholts (Klappholz) for use by coopers and carpenters. Numerous other varieties, including ships' masts and coniferous softwoods for scaffolding, also were imported. So too were yew bowstaves (Bogenholz) from the Carpathian forest regions.<sup>47</sup>

In the pitch and tar trade along the Vistula merchants from Thorn were important middlemen. Ashes from Mazovia were also transported along this route, or from Lithuania over Kovno, while Hungarian iron and copper augmented the principal overland imports, reaching the Baltic via Cracow and Thorn. Two other commodities were crucial to Danzig's overseas trade: grain and wax. Cereal exports, and especially barley, rye and wheat, from Mazovia, and greater Poland were redirected to western Europe through Danzig or Lübeck. Shipments to England were intermittent, however, and apparently coincidental with English shortfalls. By contrast, consignments of wax reached English harbours in Danzig ships on a regular basis. The major sources were in Lithuania, and again Kovno was one of the main outlets. Wax was usually shipped to western markets in large blocks (Stro) weighing up to several hundred kilograms.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> O. Rackham, Ancient Woodland. (London, 1980), 151; L.F. Salzman, Building England down to 1540. (Oxford, 1967), 245-48; R.W. Symonds, "Furniture : Post Roman", History of Technology, ed. C. Singer et al., (Oxford, 1956), II 244; W. Stark, op. cit., 96-105; LUB. X no. 124; HUB. VIII no. 222; W. Stark, "Die Danziger Pfahlkammerbücher (1468-1476) als Quelle für den Schiffs-und Warenverkehr zwischen den wendischen Hansestädten und Danzig", Rostocker Beiträge. N.F. 1 (Rostock, 1967), 71.

<sup>48</sup> M. Malowist, op. cit., 108-12; W. Stark, Lübeck und Danzig in der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts. (Weimar, 1973), 113-26.

The western orientation of Danzig's salt and cloth importers also applied to their export trade, which depended on the long-distance carriage of low-value bulk commodities. Though variations were numerous, there were two predominant patterns in Hanseatic shipping between the Baltic and England: regular, uninterrupted voyages originating in Danzig, and annual visits to English ports by ships integrated into the Bay salt trade and commerce with the Lowlands.

There was considerable direct sea traffic between Danzig and eastern England, a voyage that could be accomplished two or three times in a calendar year. An example is provided by the accounts of Lynn and Danzig for 1467-68.<sup>49</sup> Danzig shipper Paul Roole, who regularly called at Lynn during the mid-1460s, docked there in December 1467. He sailed for Danzig, laden with cloth, at the end of February 1468, and was back in Lynn off-loading wood, osmund and canvas by the second week in May. At Whitsuntide he was anchored at Helsingor on his way back to Danzig,<sup>50</sup> and he entered the port of Lynn again on August 11th, apparently unaware of the fate of other Hansards in England, with another shipment of boards, oars, tar and iron. Two return trips between England and the eastern Baltic, including the off-loading and refreighting of cargo, were completed in slightly more than five months, and there would have been plenty of time for Roole to return to his home port again in 1468 had not the general arrest of all Hansards in England prevented him. Another Danzig shipper involved in this direct trade was Jesse Bunde, master of one of the ships returning home from England in 1460. He refreighted his ship with oars, tar, wood and iron, and

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<sup>49</sup> WAPG. 300.19/3 4r.,21v.; PRO. E122 97/9. See Appendix A.2.1.

<sup>50</sup> HUB. IX no. 519#1,2.

had arrived back in Lynn by mid-October of that same year.<sup>51</sup>

Other Baltic skippers disposed of bulk cargoes in eastern England, though not necessarily in exchange for English cloth. They were more closely linked to the Bay salt trade. One of them was Hildebrand van der Wald of Danzig, who brought wood, ashes, osmund and tar to Lynn at the end of November 1459. English particulars of accounts record only ships with taxable cargoes, and when there is no reference to a vessel leaving port, it may be presumed that it departed in ballast. There is no record of van der Wald leaving Lynn, but the 1460 Danzig account shows him returning to the Baltic from the Bay, laden with salt. He sailed back to Lynn later in the year with Jesse Bunde.<sup>52</sup> Among the other Baltic Hansards trading to England and to other ports along the Atlantic seaboard was Derick Schach, master of the 'George' of Danzig. He brought iron, wood and canvas worth £150 to Hull in June 1467, and departed there on July 19th with a cargo of cloth and lead. However, he returned to Danzig in 1468 "uth der Baije", carrying only salt.<sup>53</sup> This pattern is indicative of the integrated trade of merchants and shippers who disposed of their Baltic cargoes in England and were also active in hauling salt from the Bay of Bourgneuf.

The traffic in cheap Bay salt from Bourgneuf, Brouage and La Rochelle was an integral feature of the northern European trade structure in the fifteenth century. The demand for salt in the eastern Baltic far exceeded the supply from indigenous sources, so large

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<sup>51</sup> WAPG. 300.19/1 2r.; PRO. E122 96/41.

<sup>52</sup> WAPG. 300.19/1 32v.; PRO. E122 96/41.

<sup>53</sup> WAPG. 300.19/3 23v.; PRO. E122 62/10.



convoys of ships from the Lowland and Baltic ports weighed anchor for the Biscay coast each year, perhaps carrying fish, grain or cloth, and returned to northern waters laden with salt. Some also brought back wine cargoes from La Rochelle, while still others ventured as far south as Lisbon for spices, fruit, sugar, and Iberian salt from Setubal.<sup>54</sup> Though some salt was off-loaded in England and the Lowland ports, the Hanseatic hulks and other vessels chartered in Holland and Zealand brought large shipments to the Baltic. There it was transhipped from Lübeck to the Bergen comptoir, Riga and Reval, and from Danzig to the markets of the Prusso-Polish hinterland. In 1468 sixty ships reached Danzig with salt and wine cargoes from the Bay. Other fleets, including those from Holland, often sailed directly to Königsberg, Memel, Riga and Reval.<sup>55</sup>

This annual transfer of bulk cargo over vast distances lent itself to a variety of auxiliary or tangential trading activities. Among them was the Hanseatic trade to England, and in particular the traffic in bulk goods from the Baltic. Seasonal climatic restrictions prevented Baltic skippers like Schach and van der Wald from returning home during the winter, but a ship off-loaded in England before late autumn could then depart, either in ballast or laden with cloth, for winter service in southern waters. Cloth could be taken across the Channel or disposed of almost anywhere along the Atlantic seaboard en route to the Bay or Lisbon. Vessels freighted with salt during the winter could then return to England, the Lowland ports, or the Baltic.

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<sup>54</sup> HUB. VIII no. 21, 84, 215; 538, HR. (2) V no. 666-71. Also A.R. Bridbury, England and the Salt Trade in the later Middle Ages. (Oxford, 1955), 76-93.

<sup>55</sup> LUB. X no. 173, 283; CPR. 1452-1461. 118; WAPG. 300.19/3 20r.-29r. For the Hollanders trading to Prussia and Lithuania see HUB. VIII no. 412, and H.A. Poelman, Bronnen. (1) II no. 2278.

Some Hanseatic shippers did in fact haul Bay salt back to England, for both Hanseatic and English merchants. Hans Schomaker brought a cargo of wainscots and pitch to Yarmouth in October 1451, returned there with salt the following spring, and left again carrying cloth. In October 1458 he again brought ninety charges of "sal de bay" worth £60 to London. In the early 1460s Hanseatic and alien skippers also delivered salt and wine cargoes to Ipswich for Cologne merchant Johann van Ae.<sup>56</sup> In December 1457 Baltic shipper Gasper Sculte brought a cargo of Bay salt to London for John Warnes. He also agreed to freight seventy charges of Bay salt to England for Winchelsea merchant John French, only to discover on his arrival at the Bay that the Englishman had not the means to pay for a cargo. The resultant confusion caused the ship to be delayed at the Bay some eight weeks. After securing a loan of ninety-four marks on behalf of French, Sculte freighted the cargo and brought it to the Thames, where he was delayed at least another twenty-four days waiting for payment, and again forced to "abide behynd other hulkes of his contre in grete perell".<sup>57</sup>

It has been suggested that by the mid-fifteenth century the Hanseatic towns likely employed about one thousand of their own sea-going vessels, and that perhaps half of them were involved in the east-west trade from the Baltic to the Atlantic.<sup>58</sup> Various small craft were

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<sup>56</sup> PRO. E122 151/69,70, 76/42,46 (Hans Schomaker), E122 52/43,44 (Heyne Yake bringing salt to Ipswich in May 1462), and E122 52/46 (Deryk Berne, Thomas Jonnesson and Walter Hermansson bringing salt to Ipswich in May 1464).

<sup>57</sup> PRO. C1/26/193. Sculte's undated petition to Chancery is addressed to the bishop of Winchester, Chancellor during 35-38 Henry VI. See Appendix A.4.3. Gasper Sculte is listed in the debt register for Dowgate ward dated 24th October 1457. S. Jenks, *op. cit.*, 94. He also freighted forty-eight charges of Bay salt to London for John Warnes on 16th December 1457. PRO. E122 203/4.

<sup>58</sup> O. Lienau, "Danziger Schiffahrt und Schiffbau in der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts", *Zeitschrift des Westpreussischen Geschichtsvereins*, LXX (1930), 72; H. Steida, "Schiffahrtsregister", *HGbl.*, 1884 (1885), 77-115.

used for coastal traffic, but larger ships - the Hanseatic kogs, hulks, and later caravels - were the main carriers in the long-distance trade. It is not easy to distinguish precisely one type from another, though prior to mid-century kogs were single masted clinker-built vessels, and generally smaller than later types that featured forecastles, poop decks and stern rudders. Three masts eventually became more common, and a typical hulk of the later fifteenth century, with a keel length of about seventeen meters and a beam of almost six, would have a burden tonnage of well over a hundred tons. However, much larger caravel-built vessels were being constructed in Danzig by the 1480s. Up to a dozen or more partners shared ownership of the large Hanseatic ships, which, when they did leave port for England, the Lowlands or the Bay, were crewed by Hansards, and frequently sailed in convoys. Baltic shipping, however, was closed down between November and February, when the usually inclement weather increased the risk of shipwreck.<sup>59</sup>

### The Hanse, England, and the Brabant Fairs

Within the broad Hanseatic commercial network the trade of the Cologners, Westphalian merchants, and other Hansards resident at the London Steelyard was somewhat different, though not entirely separate from those primarily concerned with the Anglo-Baltic trade. As it was in the Lowlands, the trade of this group was closely

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<sup>59</sup> O. Lienau, op. cit., 74-75; T. Hirsch, op. cit., 263-64; E. Daenell, "The Policy of the German Hanseatic League respecting the Mercantile Marine", American Historical Review, XV (1909-10), 50-51; H. Winter, Das Haneschiff im ausgehenden 15. Jahrhundert, (Rostock, 1961), 1-33; R.M. Nance, "A Hanseatic Bergentrader of 1489", Mariner's Mirror, III (1913), 161-67; "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 768. For the joint ownership of vessels the Bay fleet losses of 1449 provide a good example: HUB, VIII no. 215. A valuable study of English ships of this period is D. Burwash, op. cit.. See also A. McGowan, Tiller and Whipstaff : The Development of the Sailing Ship 1400-1700, (London, 1981), 3-17.



linked to the textile manufacturing industries, though not merely to the purchase and redistribution of woollen cloth. Merchants at the Steelyard were, together with the Italians, the main foreign suppliers of soap, mordants, and essential dyestuffs like woad, litmus and madder. Zealand was a principal source for madder. However, there was also some dependence on more distant regions in France and the upper Rhineland areas around Speyer and Worms. Litmus and woad were obtainable throughout the Maas-Rhine delta region, as well as in Picardy and Normandy. Distribution of these dyestuffs along the Atlantic seaboard and to England was keyed to the markets of Bruges, Antwerp and Bergen op Zoom, where again the merchants of Cologne assumed an integral role.<sup>60</sup>

Industries in or near Cologne also supplied a variety of manufactured wares for export, such as wire, "Cologne thread", and inexpensive linens, and the Cologners also linked England to the steel manufacturing centres of Siegen and Breckerfeld. Still other consignments of raw materials and finished goods, which eventually found their way to England via Cologne, were purchased by the Steelyard merchants or their agents during regular visits to the trade fairs at Frankfurt. Precious metals, furs, potash, wax and grain from Poland were available also at the Leipzig market. Finally, the Cologners brought shipments of Rhinish wine to England, although it is doubtful they were very profitable unless their arrival preceded that of the Bordeaux ships.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> F. Irsigler, op. cit., 89-90, 97-98, G. Asaert, "Handel in kleurstoffen op de Antwerpse markt tijdens de XVe eeuw", Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden, LXXXVIII (1973), 380-83, 392-93, 399-400.

<sup>61</sup> F. Irsigler, op.cit., esp. 12-20, 32-36, 60-61, 184-92, 200, 266-73; F. Rülke, Die Verlagerung der Handelswege zwischen 1450 und 1550 und ihre Rückwirkung auf die deutsche Hanse. D. Phil. thesis, (Hannover, 1971), esp. 150-55; B. Kuske, "Die Kölner Handelsbeziehungen in der 15. Jahrhundert", Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial-und Wirtschaftsgeschichte, VII (1909), 296-308.

Consignments of cloth purchased by Hansards in England were distributed to many of the same regions that served the Hanseatic import trade. English woollens were retailed to the south Germans at the Antwerp and Bergen op Zoom trade fairs, or transported by river to Mainz and Frankfurt, whence they could be taken onward to Regensburg and Vienna. There were overland connections with Cracow and Breslau as well, via Nürnberg, Leipzig and Posen. But these connections with the south and east were not the sole focus of the Cologners' distributive trade in English woollens in the mid-fifteenth century. They also redirected English cloth to the Baltic via Hamburg and ports in Zealand. The ship which transported Thomas Kent and John Stocker to the Baltic in 1450 was carrying at least five "terling" of English cloth belonging to Cologners. In 1452, the diversion of other shipments over Hamburg and Neustadt, intended to avoid Lübeck's embargo on English goods, greatly annoyed Cologne and Danzig merchants of the London Steelyard.<sup>42</sup>

Both the trade in English woollens and the traffic in dyestuffs and low-bulk imports relied to a great degree on non-seasonal shipping to and from ports like Middelburg, Dordrecht, Veere and Antwerp, and were by no means confined to Hanseatic carriers. And, in contrast to the majority of shipments from the Baltic, which usually belonged exclusively to Hansards, combined cargoes belonging to denizen, alien and Hanseatic merchants were common. In January 1459, for example, alien shipper Walter Hermansson arrived at Colchester with a large cargo for alien and denizen traders, as well as £500 worth of madder, litmus, woad, alum, "holandcloth" and other merchandise belonging to merchants of the

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<sup>42</sup> B. Kuske, Quellen, II no. 23-24, 36-37, 58, 64, 69, 607; HUB, VIII no. 147-48, 159, 174, 176; HR, (2) IV no. 287, 634; LUB, XI no. 367; A. Siesch, Die Handelsbeziehungen zwischen Nürnberg und Posen im europäischen Wirtschaftsverkehr des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts, (Wiesbaden, 1970), esp. 90-95.

Steelyard. Hermansson departed England in February, carrying 414 woollen cloths for Hanseatic merchants. At least 280 of these broadcloths belonged to Cologners.<sup>43</sup>

The direct cross-Channel movement of cargo was partly dependent on Antwerp's sea-going merchant fleet, which by the 1470s numbered about sixty vessels. Until mid-century Antwerp captains had regularly freighted English wool to the Mediterranean for Florentine merchants. But the closing of the Levant, after the fall of Constantinople, precipitated a decline in the Florentine cloth industry, and lessened the demand for high quality English wool. Thereafter, when Anglo-Burgundian political squabbles did not prevent them, shippers from Antwerp increasingly turned to the Channel routes, hauling linen, dyestuffs and mixed cargo to London and Colchester, and returning to the Brabant fairs with English cloth belonging primarily to Hansards and Englishmen.<sup>44</sup> Throughout the 1460s several Antwerp carriers were employed by the Steelyard merchants on a regular basis. The commercial interests of the Hansards at Antwerp and London also extended to the realm of shipping. It was not uncommon for Antwerp shippers to purchase vessels from the same Hansards who regularly hired their services. Several merchants active in the seaborne trade to and from London, including Johann Dasse (Nijmegen), Arndt Stakelhusen (Cologne), Johann van Dorne (Cologne) and Everhard Clippinck (Cologne/Dortmund), numbered among the Hansards who sold vessels to Antwerp captains during the 1450s.<sup>45</sup> Unlike the shippers from Zealand and Holland, the Antwerp carriers were not yet particularly significant in the Bay

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<sup>43</sup> PRO. E122 52/42.

<sup>44</sup> G. Asaert, "Antwerp ships in English harbours in the fifteenth century", Acta Historiae Neerlandicae, XII (1979), 30-34.

<sup>45</sup> G. Asaert, De Antwerpse Scheepvaart in de XVe Eeuw (1394-1480). (Brussels, 1973), 154, 248-54, 411; SAA. SR. 57, 153r., 256v., 257r.



salt trade, nor in the carriage trade to and from the Baltic. Although a Danzig-bound Antwerp ship, freighted with cloth at Coldwater, was captured by the Lübeckers in 1453, subsequent Danzig toll records for the 1460s do not mention vessels from Antwerp.<sup>46</sup>

Because of the prohibitions on English cloth at Bruges, and the uncertainty of the Baltic market in the 1450s, Hanseatic and English merchants alike required a transit/distribution point to link the London woollen trade with the vast German and Lowland markets. Dordrecht, ideally situated to serve both the Rhineland and North Sea traffic, was a logical choice, but stringent staple policies there were unpalatable, particularly to the Cologners. Antwerp and neighbouring Bergen op Zoom, on the other hand, welcomed the English cloth trade, since they had no significant textile industry to protect, and no close relationship with Brabantine drapery towns dependent on export industry. Moreover, the two towns already hosted great trading fairs twice yearly. Each autumn the international merchant community was drawn to the St. Bavo fair (Bamissmarct) at Antwerp, followed by the Cold fair (Coude Bergemarct) at Bergen op Zoom. They returned in spring to Bergen's Passion fair (Paessche Bergemarct) and the Whitsun fair (Pinxteremarct) at Antwerp. Any industrial base which did exist in or around these centres was almost wholly dependent on the dyeing and finishing of cloth imports.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> HUB. VIII no. 250; WAPG. 300.19/3.

<sup>47</sup> J. Munro, "Bruges and the abortive staple in English cloth", Revue Belge de philologie et d'histoire, XLIV (1966), 1137-59; H. Van der Wee, The Growth of the Antwerp Market and the European Economy. (The Hague, 1963), II 70-83; R. Davis, "The Rise of Antwerp and its English Connection 1406-1510", Trade, Government and Economy in Pre-Industrial England, ed. D.C. Coleman and A.H. John, (London, 1976), 4-11; C. Wehrmann, "Die Gründung des hanseatischen Hauses zu Antwerpen", HGBll., 1873 (1874), esp. 84-87. Hansards refused to abandon their trade at Antwerp or Bergen op Zoom in 1454, HR. (2) IV no. 247#31-41, or use Utrecht in 1456. HR. (2) IV no. 414. Antwerp granted Hansards trading privileges for twenty years in 1457, HUB. VIII no. 655, and

(Footnote Continued)

Merchant adventurers possessed a house at Antwerp as early as 1407, though English bullionist policies, requiring cash payment for wool at the Calais staple, triggered a series of Burgundian embargoes that periodically undermined their trade in the 1430s and 1440s. The lifting of the embargo in 1452 reopened Antwerp to the English, and coincided with the evacuation of the Bruges staple by the Hansards. The Hanseatic merchants went to Utrecht, while the English returned to Antwerp. Still more of their trade was directed there after the loss of Bordeaux in 1453, and the English presence at Antwerp was sustained throughout the 1450s and early 1460s. Registers of the Antwerp aldermen, which constitute a partial record of contracts, debts and litigations, make frequent mention of merchants from London and Colchester. At Antwerp these Englishmen encountered not only Lowland merchants and Cologners, but also traders from Breslau, Cracow, Frankfurt, Hamburg and the Baltic.<sup>60</sup> The reimposition of the Burgundian ban in 1464 again threatened English trade, forcing William Caxton, then governor of the merchant adventurers, to relocate the English trading community temporarily at Utrecht. By then the Hansards had officially returned to Bruges, and Utrecht, eager to accommodate a foreign merchant community, immediately offered the English a series of attractive trading privileges. The English stayed at Utrecht throughout the Anglo-Burgundian commercial negotiations of 1466, and only the agreement between England and Duke Charles, concluded in the autumn of 1467, prompted their return to Antwerp.<sup>61</sup>

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(Footnote Continued)

Cologners objecting to taxes in Bruges were given extended privileges by Antwerp in 1466. HUB. IX no. 286.

<sup>60</sup> SAA. SR. 43-72. I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Asaert, who has kindly made available numerous references to foreign merchants from the Antwerp registers.

<sup>61</sup> W. Stein, "Die Merchant Adventurers in Utrecht 1464-67", HGBll., IX (1889),  
(Footnote Continued)



Already in the 1450s major woollen shipments from London and Ipswich/Colchester, owned by Hanseatic and English merchants, were timed to coincide with the trade fairs at Bergen op Zoom and Antwerp. Like their English counterparts, the Steelyard merchants, and particularly those from Cologne and the lower Rhineland, either attended the fairs or were represented there by resident factors.<sup>70</sup> Money borrowed to finance cloth purchases was repaid during these fairs, and their importance is further confirmed by shipping patterns from the southern English ports. For instance, in 1458 the St. Bravo fair at Antwerp commenced on 24th September, and more than 950 broadcloths belonging to Hansards, plus several hundred more owned by Englishmen, were shipped from London during the second week of September. The fiscal year 1461-62, during which Hanseatic broadcloth exports from the capital exceeded 9,000 units, provides another example. Approximately 2,000 cloths were shipped between October 9th and November 9th, to arrive in time for the annual Cold fair at Bergen op Zoom. No further Hanseatic cloth shipments were recorded until mid-February 1462. From then until the beginning of March, however, another 2,000 cloths, likely bound for the Passion fair at Bergen op Zoom, were freighted for the Hansards. The final two weeks of April saw a further 1,900 cloths customed for export from London, almost certainly destined for the Whitsun fair at Antwerp. Unfortunately, the extant 1461-62 particulars of accounts for London do not extend to the end of the Exchequer year, but there can be little doubt that a fourth series of shipments was made again in early September, for the autumn fair at Antwerp. A

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(Footnote Continued)

179-89. For the fellowship of merchant adventurers at Antwerp and Bergen op Zoom in the fifteenth century see also E. Weise, "Die Hanse, England und die Merchant Adventurers", Jahrbuch des Kölnischen Geschichtsvereins, XXXI (1956-57), 156-58, and O. de Smedt, De Engelse Natie te Antwerpen in de 16e Eeuw. (Antwerp, 1950), I 60-135.

<sup>70</sup> SAA. SR. 45 173r.,274v., 46 103v., 50 316v., 51 132r., 61 48v.,357r., 63 38v.,200r.,245v., 68 128r.,309r.



similar pattern is also discernible in the accounts of Ipswich/Colchester.<sup>71</sup>

But the importance of Antwerp and Bergen op Zoom as expanding centres of international commerce and of the Hanseatic trade, did not stem exclusively from their advantageous locations. Nor from unrestrictive policies vis à vis the transit trade in English woollens and manufactured wares and dyestuffs. Their situation on the easily navigable Scheldt-Honte channels, which had been deepened by great innundations in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, suited the Baltic trade as well. Bruges and her outport of Sluis were waging a losing battle against the silting of the Zwin estuary, and by mid-century cargoes from and for the Flemish staple were routinely handled at Middelburg and Arnemuiden roads. Likewise, to the north, Deventer and the Zuider Zee port of Kampen were increasingly less able to accommodate the deep-draft vessels from Prussia and their heavy cargoes. Again Antwerp, Bergen op Zoom and their outports in Zeeland were preferred. Baltic cargoes could be carried directly to the fairs, or off-loaded at the quays of Middelburg, Veere, Vlissingen or Zierikzee. They could be stockpiled for subsequent distribution or redirected to England either by Hanseatic shippers or by English and Lowland carriers serving the cross-Channel trade.<sup>72</sup>

During the 1450s and 1460s, then, a number of circumstances combined with political developments to favour the ascendancy of the Brabant fairs. Above all, protectionist statutes at Bruges, aimed specifically at the increasingly competitive English textile industry, invited a shift in the distributive market for English

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<sup>71</sup> S. Jenks, op. cit., 78-79; PRO. E122 52/42-46, 76/42,48, 194/11.

<sup>72</sup> R. Davis, op. cit., 406; HUB. VIII no. 244; HR. (2) IV no. 52; S.T. Bindoff, The Scheldt Question to 1839. (London, 1945), 34.

woollens, and the transfer was accelerated when the Bordeaux trade of the merchant adventurers was pushed northward. Expansion to the Baltic was checked by Lübeck and the Danes, so Brabant became a principal conduit for textiles from England. Shipping patterns also altered, as more Antwerp shippers joined the cross-Channel routes. Moreover, although the Hansards had evacuated the Bruges comptoir for a time, they could not contemplate abandoning the international fairs at Antwerp and Bergen op Zoom. In December 1457 they were granted free trading privileges at Antwerp for a period of twenty years.<sup>73</sup> Finally, the silting of the Zwin was beginning to hinder the large Baltic hulks laden with cargo for Bruges, so that they were increasingly obliged to moor instead at the Zealand quays, which were the primary transit points for England's cloth export trade to Brabant.

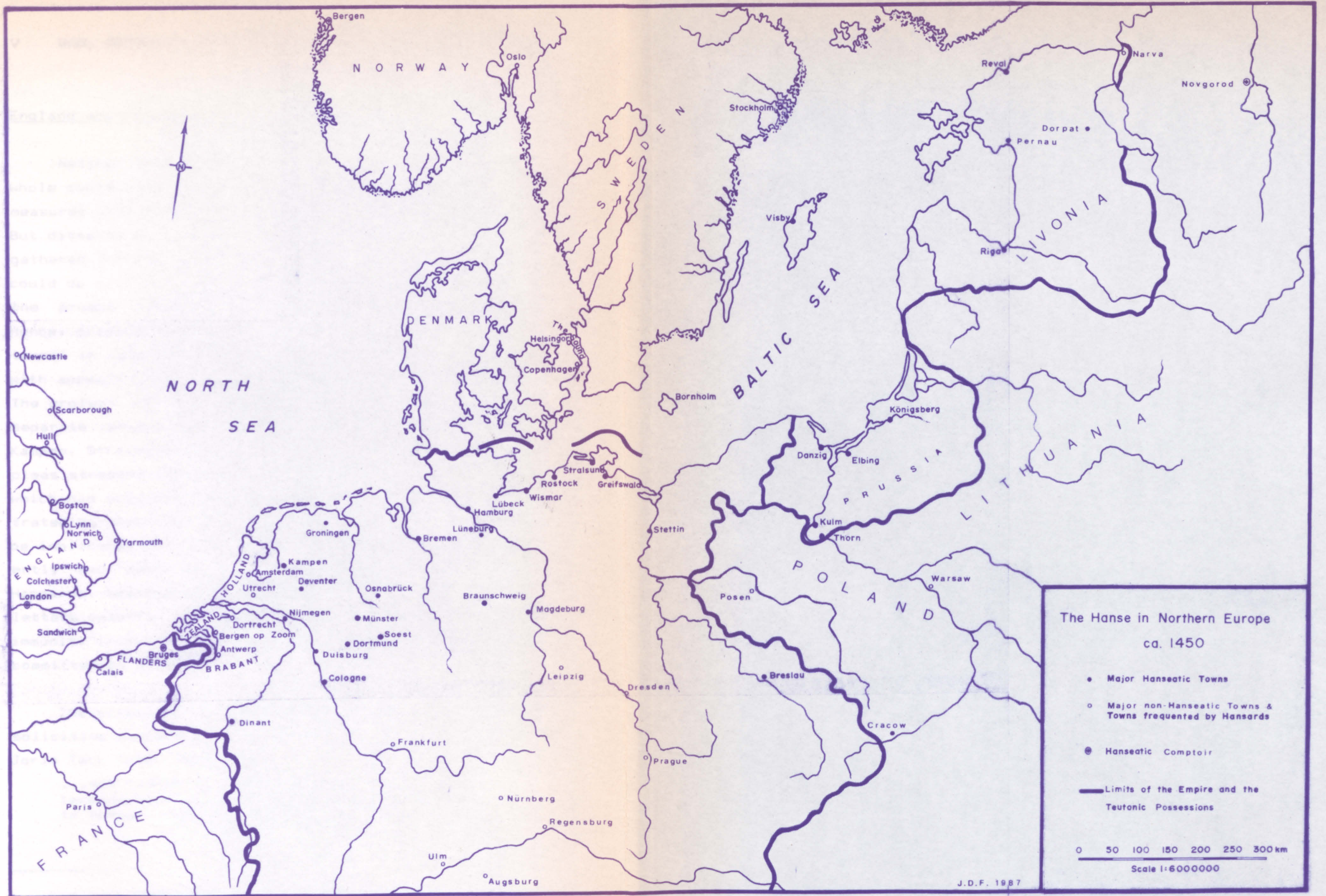
The heightened significance of the fairs was not necessarily compatible with entrenched economic interests within the Hanseatic sphere, however. Again it accentuated the political divergence between Lübeck and Cologne. For the seaborne trade of Lübeck, such English cloth as might be required for Baltic distribution could be freighted directly from London and the east coast ports. Otherwise, the woollen industry in Flanders was sufficiently capable of supplying the comparatively static Baltic market. Hence, for Lübeck, leader of the Hanse and the principal cloth distributor for Scandinavia, the continued maintenance of the Bruges comptoir seemed viable. But the merchants of Cologne were strongly connected to the more dynamic markets of the southern German territories. Flemish production could not meet

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<sup>73</sup> HUB. VIII no. 655; HR. (2) IV no. 247#31-41; S.T. Bindoff. op. cit., 52-56. From the mid-1460s onward collection of the main ducal toll on shipping through the Scheldt-Honte channels (the Honte watch of the Iersekeroord toll collectors) was suspended due to protracted litigation, and this undoubtedly enhanced Antwerp's foreign trade prospects still further.

their growing needs, and Bruges was of little use in the woollen trade from England except for uninterrupted transit. Bruges remained a vital market for other commodities such as wool, alum and Flemish cloth, but since the retailing of English woollens already had become an indispensable facet of Cologne's commercial interests, Cologne merchants now were turning to Antwerp and Bergen op Zoom. And logically so, for the fairs, in attracting more of the cloth trade, also lured a growing international merchant community. If the Cologners could not market English woollens in Brabant, then other foreign entrepreneurs undoubtedly would.







England and the Hanse at war

Neither the Steelyard community nor the Hanse as a whole could have anticipated the extraordinarily severe measures instituted against them in the summer of 1468. But dismayed and angered as they were, the delegates who gathered for the Hanseatic assembly at Lübeck in August could do little except initiate a diplomatic campaign for the prompt release of their imprisoned colleagues. Hence, prior to the royal council's "verdict" or "sentence" in late autumn, the English government was deluged with appeals from members of the Hanseatic community. The protest of the Hansetag was followed closely by separate letters from important towns such as Nijmegen, Kampen, Stralsund, Soest, and Duisburg. Typically, the pleas stressed the argument that the piratical encounter which had precipitated the English reprisals was orchestrated by the king of Denmark, and that the Hanse could be implicated only insofar as a few Baltic pirates apparently had been willing accessories. The Steelyard Hansards, meanwhile, argued that their arrest violated letters patent, confirmed by Edward IV, which granted immunity from arrest and prosecution for transgressions committed by others.<sup>1</sup>

The prisoners in London also occupied themselves in soliciting support within the kingdom. Duisburg merchant Joris Tack later recounted:

...doe hadden wy gefangen gemeynlich al den lakenmackers int lant geschrieven to London to kommen, omme ons bystant to doen....<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> HUB. IX no. 495, 501-06, 509; HA Köln Hanse III K 15/47.

<sup>2</sup> HUB. IX no. 541#VI-4.

The clothmakers of Bristol, Wiltshire, Somerset, and Gloucester responded with petitions reminding the government that the Hansards were and ever had been friends of England, and expressing considerable alarm at the harmful repercussions of their arrest and detention. The men of Gloucestershire protested:

...your seid besechers been and have been deferred and delaied of paiement of ther dettes owyng to theyme by the seid [Hanse] merchauntes which drawith among theyme to the summe of £5000 and more to ther full grete damage and likely undoyng, if it this long shold stond.<sup>3</sup>

But the king's councillors were unmoved by such practical considerations. According to their command goods belonging to Hansards other than the merchants of Cologne were forfeited, and the Esterlings remained in prison. In addition, the Crown forced a loan of £1,000 from the Steelyard merchants, Cologners and Esterlings alike.<sup>4</sup>

Another wave of diplomatic protests followed in the new year. Appeals from the Emperor, the king of Poland, and several territorial <sup>n</sup>princes already had reached London. Now came a plea from the archbishop of Cologne on behalf of the merchants of Nijmegen. A letter from Flanders admonished the English government for jeopardizing the entire "reipublice communis mercature", and William Caxton, then head of England's merchant adventurers in the Lowlands, is also said to have voiced support for the Hansards.<sup>5</sup> Yet it was not until late March 1469, following repeated requests by the duke of Burgundy, that the English relented. But again the vague charges

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid. no. 525. A similar complaint was drafted by the clothmakers "withyn the townes of Bristowe, Bathe, Wellys, Glastynbury, Shepton, Malette, Coscombe, Trowebrigge, Bradeford, ffrome Bekyngton and Warmyster in the countees of Bristowe, Somerset and Wiltshire". Appendix A.5.2.

<sup>4</sup> HUB. IX no. 467, 541#VI-b-5, XI-2, 555; HA Köln Hanse III K 7/17-18, 15/83.

<sup>5</sup> HUB. IX no. 542-45, 549, 554, p. 430 note 1; PRO. E30/529.



against the Hanse were reiterated before the Esterlings were released and invited to treat with English envoys at Bruges in May or June. The required indemnity was reduced to £3,500, and the Hansards given until the end of August to pay it.<sup>6</sup>

The merchants of Cologne were, by this time, irretrievably split from the rest of the Hanse. Prior to the council's verdict they had attempted to purchase letters from the Emperor on behalf of all the imprisoned Hansards. Wine was sent to the prisoners at Ludgate, and legal costs and gifts to English officials were paid for out of the Steelyard coffers.<sup>7</sup> But Cologne's early acceptance of exclusive status for her merchants, and the Crown's eventual decision to confirm it as well as the punishment of other Hansards, ultimately began to erode personal loyalties within the Steelyard fellowship. By year's end Hermann Wanmate wrote to Lübeck that the Cologners had become defensive and unhelpful, and quite rightly surmised they would not willfully alter their current status in England. In February 1469 the king implicitly confirmed the new status quo by arranging to reimburse the Cologne merchants £516 for their portion of the £1,000 loan he had forced from the Steelyard.<sup>8</sup> The Cologners subsequently ignored the Hansetag's command that all Hansards leave England by June 24th, which also threatened suspension of Hanseatic privileges for those reluctant to comply. That same summer von Wesel and his lawyers made three visits to the king at Windsor and St. Albans to have the charters of the Cologne merchants extended.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> HUB. IX no. 569-70; HR. (2) VI no. 165.

<sup>7</sup> HUB. IX no. 497, 540#103-60.

<sup>8</sup> HR. (2) VI no. 124; HUB. IX no. 555, XI no. 444#2.

<sup>9</sup> HUB. IX no. 585, 639#47.

The lengthy confinement of the merchants had hardened attitudes within the rest of the Hanseatic community, and England's refusal to retract charges of complicity in the Sound incident was an indignity which could no longer go unchallenged. Buoyed, perhaps, by the release of the hostages in England, the assembly that convened at Lübeck in the spring of 1469 not only recalled them to their home towns, but also issued a scathing rebuttal of the English allegations.<sup>10</sup> The secretary of the Bruges comptoir was instructed to reject any English claims and to press for nullification of the council's sentence. The Hansards now would settle for nothing less than full compensation for all damages resulting from the English reprisals. Predictably, the demands presented at Bruges were rejected, and subsequent political events in England quickly diminished still further any possibility of negotiated settlement. By the end of July Edward IV was prisoner of the disaffected earl of Warwick. With royal administration in the hands of the Neville faction, prospects of compromise with the Hanse all but vanished.

The significance of this turn of events was not lost on Duke Charles of Burgundy, to whom Edward's insecure reign was a source of appreciable concern. Cognizant that a protracted Anglo-Hanseatic dispute would disrupt the North Sea and Channel trade to the likely detriment of the Burgundian treasury, and acutely aware of Warwick's French affiliations, Charles had urged restraint in England's quarrel with the Hanse. But an English administration friendly to France was of no political use to him, so the waning fortunes of his Yorkist ally now dictated a somewhat more sympathetic attitude toward the Hanse. The Hansards themselves must have realized the futility of further discussions with an English government alternately too preoccupied with

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., no. 584-85, 588.



political intrigue to deal responsibly with international mercantile disputes, or controlled by a faction openly hostile to the Hanseatic community. After a year of diplomatic initiatives moderate inclinations, which were particularly evident in the Wendish sector, gave way to more militant ones. Nothing more could be achieved through negotiation. The disagreement now would be settled on the high seas. In the autumn of 1469, without formal authorization from the Hansetag, the Hanseatic merchants in Bruges fitted out two privateers for action against English shipping. The vessels were commanded by captains from Danzig, Paul Beneke and Martin Bardewik, and operated out of Flemish ports with the tacit approval of Duke Charles of Burgundy.<sup>11</sup>

The privateers deployed in the Channel and the North Sea throughout the ensuing four years were essentially merchant ships manned by extra levies of soldiers. The refitting of a vessel for military service primarily attempted to create additional space for soldiers and their weapons, and accommodate whatever rudimentary cannon might be available.<sup>12</sup> Because they had to be revictualled frequently and were in constant need of repair, they remained at sea only for short periods, usually not exceeding two or three weeks. As might be expected, the owners and crews were as interested in profit as in forcing a settlement with England. There were skirmishes with French ships as well as English, and by the summer of 1470 a state of war also existed between the Hanse and France.

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<sup>11</sup> "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit.; 731, P. Simson, Geschichte der Stadt Danzig bis 1626. (Aalen, 1967), I 288.

<sup>12</sup> O. Lienau, op. cit., 74; P. Simson, op. cit., 289. But already since 1447 all Hanseatic ships were supposed to be armed in order to ward off pirates. E. Daenell, "The Policy of the German Hanseatic League", op. cit., 49.



The first victim of the new Hanseatic initiative was the 'Joen' of Newcastle, taken on New Years Day 1470<sup>13</sup>, and it was not long before other privateering vessels were on their way from Danzig. One of them was captained by Eler Bokelman, a skipper well acquainted with both sea warfare and the Anglo-Baltic trade. After serving against the Order in the early 1460s, he had rejoined the Danzig/England route, and in the summer of 1468 his ship and a cargo belonging to several Hanseatic merchants were seized at Hull. In late May 1470 he and Bardewik engaged a far superior English flotilla off the coast of Scotland. Though eventually repelled, the Danzigers evidently inflicted considerable damage on their enemy.<sup>13</sup>

English shipping subsequently incurred substantial losses during the summers of 1470 and 1471, even though Danzig and Hamburg appeared to be the only major Hanseatic towns interested in an active campaign.<sup>14</sup> An official boycott of English merchandise was instituted in autumn 1470. With this measure Danzig and the Polish king concurred, provided other Hanseatic towns were prepared to observe the sanction.<sup>15</sup> The Hansetag of August-September 1470 also introduced trade restrictions aimed at strengthening the Bruges staple and isolating the merchants of Cologne, and threatened the Cologners with expulsion from the confederation. Unswayed, the Cologne merchants remained in England, and the town was formally expelled from the Hanse in February 1471. And

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<sup>13</sup> "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 731-32; HR. (2) VI no. 314, HUB. IX no. 538, 541.

<sup>14</sup> C.F. Richmond, Royal Administration. 348; "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 733; "Die Chronik Christians von Geren", Die Lübecker Bergenfahrer und ihre Chronistik. ed. F. Bruns, (Berlin, 1900), 360.

<sup>15</sup> HR. (2) VI no. 161, 202, 249#12, 284, 356#61-73, 360-61, 418-20. For the campaign of 1470 see also H. Fiedler, "Danzig und England : Die Handelsbestrebungen der Engländer vom Ende des 14. bis zum Anfang des 17. Jahrhunderts", Zeitschrift des Westpreussischen Geschichtsvereins, LXVIII (1928), 95.

so, the ships and goods of the turncoat Cologners also became fair game for the Hanseatic privateers. Moreover, in addition to hindering the trade of Englishmen and Cologne merchants, attacks on other foreign ships soon rekindled old animosities in Holland. Eventually, as many as eighteen Hanseatic ships became actively involved in the disruption of maritime commerce, even though Duke Charles forbade his subjects to provision the Hansards soon after Beneke's initial foray.<sup>16</sup>

In September 1470 the political turmoil in England had assumed a new magnitude, as Warwick forced Edward IV to flee the Realm. The fugitive king and his small following departed from Lynn, and were pursued closely by Hanseatic privateers en route to the Lowlands, where they were received by William Caxton. Duke Charles' support for Edward's return to England was assured by February 1471, when Warwick concluded an alliance with Louis XI. The French had already begun their assault on Burgundian territory in December, and the new treaty amounted to a declaration of war by the English, rendering Edward IV's speedy restoration essential to the Burgundians. Prodded by the duke, and apparently hopeful that if Edward safely regained his crown he would make peace with the Hanse, the Esterlings actually provided a sizable naval escort for his return to England in March 1471.<sup>17</sup>

The crossing was uneventful, and Warwick's death at Barnet on April 14th and the defeat of Queen Margaret at Tewkesbury at last removed two of the most serious threats to Edward's monarchy. Upon regaining his kingdom, however, his indebtedness to the Esterlings was set

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<sup>16</sup> HR. (2) VI no. 316, 347, 352, p. 26 note 4; B. Kuske, Quellen. I no. 513; HUB. IX no. 691, 796. For Cologne: HR. (2) VI no. 356#61-73, 106, 114-15, 358.

<sup>17</sup> A.R. Myers, "The outbreak of War between England and Burgundy in February 1471", Bulletin of Historical Research, XXXIII (1960), 114-15; "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 733; "Die Chronik Christians von Geren", op. cit., 359.



aside temporarily, and only the franchises of the Cologners were guaranteed for a further year.<sup>18</sup> And so the maritime conflict continued. Off the coasts of England Beneke and his raiders prowled unmolested, taking two more prizes and capturing the Lord Mayor of London aboard one of them. The boycott of English wares was tightened, and in August 1471 the 'Grosse Kraweel', a mammoth French-built caravel, sailed from Danzig, accompanied by a smaller ship captained by none other than the free-lance privateer Michael Ertmann.<sup>19</sup>

The 'Grosse Kraweel' was actually the 'Saint Pierre de la Rochelle', which had come to the Baltic in 1462 as part of the Bay salt fleet and was abandoned in Danzig as unseaworthy. In 1470 the civic authorities decided to refit the vessel, and when it finally left port a year later, commanded by Danzig councillor Bernt Pawest, it was armed with seventeen cannon, and carried a veritable army of more than three hundred men. Unwieldy, expensive to maintain, and barely seaworthy at the best of times, the caravel had a less than illustrious history under Pawest. He was plagued by foul weather in the winter of 1471-72, more than once the ship ran aground, and the crew was mutinous. Despite all its impressive physical credentials the 'Grosse Kraweel' spent a good part of its military career immobilized in the Zwin estuary, more a curiosity to visitors than a threat to English shipping, until Beneke assumed full command in the summer of 1472.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> CPR. 1467-1477. 272; Urkundliche Geschichte des hansischen Stahlhofes zu London, ed. J.M. Lappenberg, (Osnabrück, 1967), 134.

<sup>19</sup> "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik"; op. cit., 733.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 731, 733; O. Lienau, op. cit., 72-80; H. Fiedler, op. cit., 95-96. HR. (2) VI no. 529-59 consists of a series of letters written by Pawest while he commanded the 'Grosse Kraweel'. They provide much insight into the difficulties he and the other Hanseatic privateers encountered during 1471-72. See also Caspar Weinreichs (Footnote Continued)



During the first two summers of the Anglo-Hanseatic War only Hamburg, Danzig, and to some extent Bremen had been inclined to underwrite expensive privateering ventures. A more reluctant, perhaps even indifferent attitude prevailed in Lübeck. One reason for this, suggested by F. Rörig, may have been that the privateering contracts of the Lübeckers offered too little incentive to ships' crews, while those of Hamburg's privateers, by contrast, presented good prospects for substantial personal gain.<sup>21</sup> In any event, it was not until May 1472 that Lübeck fitted out four vessels to join Beneke, Ertmann, and several other Hanseatic ships at Sluis for what promised to be a very lucrative if not decisive campaign.<sup>22</sup>

The complete devastation of English maritime commerce, which the addition of the Lübeck squadron might have ensured, was averted, in part, by the timely stabilization of the political situation in England. With the monarchy on a more secure footing and the menace of Warwick's private navy removed, the English were able to deploy at least eighteen fighting ships in the summer of 1472, probably under the overall command of John Howard. In mid-July, only two weeks after being severely mauled by a French squadron, the Hansards were surprised by the English flotilla and soundly defeated. The ships from

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(Footnote Continued)

Danziger Chronik, ed. T. Hirsch and F.A. Vossberg, (Berlin, 1855), 93-117. In the early spring of 1472 Pawest cruised the south coast of England as far as Plymouth, then crossed to Pointe de Saint Mathieu in Brittany and then back to Sluis, but had no English prizes to show for his efforts. Ibid., 109-11.

<sup>21</sup> F. Rörig, "Ein Hamburger Kapervertrag vom Jahr 1471", HGBll., XXIII (1917), 411-19. For the costs of outfitting privateers in Hamburg, and an indication of the booty taken: Kammereirechnungen der Stadt Hamburg, ed. K. Koppmann, (Hamburg, 1878), III 55-56.

<sup>22</sup> HR. (2) VI no. 507, 524-26, 548. Only three of the Lübeck ships actually made it to Sluis. A fourth ran aground en route and was abandoned. "Die Chronik Christians von Geren", op. cit., 360; HUB. X no. 109. Cologne again complained of attacks on Channel shipping by Hamburg's privateers in January 1472. B. Kuske, Quellen. I no. 560, 568.

Lübeck were captured and burned, and Ertmann numbered among the Hanseatic prisoners.<sup>23</sup>

With the Yorkists secure in England, Duke Charles' interest in the Anglo-Burgundian alliance, and therefore a solution to the Anglo-Hanseatic dispute, also was revived. By autumn 1472 a Milanese ambassador reported from Gravelines that the duke had undertaken to bring about an agreement between England and the Esterlings. Such an enterprise was by then all the more expedient, with rumours circulating that the Hansards were now in league with the French. Although attacks on neutral shipping had prompted the duke to forbid the revictualling of privateers by his subjects, the Hansards continued to "shelter in Holland, Flanders and other of the duke's dominions" and went on "plundering some ship every day".<sup>24</sup>

The Hanseatic threat remained, but the Channel trade was preserved. Within the Hanse the reversals of 1472, which included Bardewik's death off Calais, served to further accentuate diverse attitudes. In particular, the defeats dampened Lübeck's enthusiasm for confrontation, which had been no more than moderate to begin with, and already by July 1472 there had been preliminary peace overtures from both the Wendish sector of the Hanse and the English government.<sup>25</sup> But militants within the Hanse were not yet prepared to yield. Danzig's privateers did

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<sup>23</sup> C.F. Richmond, Royal Administration, 349-50; CPR, 1467-1477, 299, 318, 340, 355; HR, (2) VI no. 534, 557-58; "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 734-35; "Die Chronik Christians von Geren", op. cit., 360; "Die Ratschronik von 1438-1482", op. cit., 99.

<sup>24</sup> Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts existing in the Archives and Collections of Milan, ed. A.B. Hinds, (London, 1912), I 166-67, 170, HUB, X no. 192, 218, X no. 691.

<sup>25</sup> HR, (2) VI no. 547, 548, 550. As early as March 1472 English ambassadors had been empowered to treat with the Hansards. PRD, E30/1073 (12-13).



not return to the Baltic, and Hamburg continued to equip fighting ships. In the autumn a pair of English and Spanish ships sailing from Flanders were captured and taken to the Elbe.<sup>26</sup> Yet to be reckoned with also was the 'Grosse Kraweel', now commanded by perhaps the most resourceful and redoubtable of Danzig's captains.

During the winter of 1472-73 the 'Grosse Kraweel' was purchased by three members of Danzig's civic council, Johann Sidinghusen, Tydman Valand, and Heinrich Nederhoff. All three were prosperous merchants, and both Valand and Nederhoff had substantial trading interests in England. They duly instructed Beneke to continue his efforts against English shipping.<sup>27</sup> The conflict at sea then resumed in the summer of 1473, and culminated in the most celebrated of all Hanseatic privateering exploits. Beneke and his men, who had wintered near Hamburg, attacked two Burgundian galleys chartered by the Medici bankers in Bruges for a voyage from Zealand to Florence. The ships also were to call at London to discharge alum and take on a consignment of English wool. The remainder of their rich cargoes consisted of woollens, linens, tapestries, and furs belonging to the Italians and English merchant adventurers in Flanders. Also aboard were two altarpieces intended for Florence, the more notable of which was Hans Memling's "Last Judgment", commissioned by a former manager of the Bruges branch of the Medici. Although the galleys flew Burgundian colours and the Hansards had been warned by the Burgundians to leave them alone, Beneke trailed them to the English coast. One galley sped on to Southampton, but the other eventually offered a fight, and after a fierce struggle that resulted in numerous casualties, the Esterlings won the day.

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<sup>26</sup> HUB. X no. 166; "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 736.

<sup>27</sup> HUB. IX no. 39, 541; HR. (2) VI no. 642-43; "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 736.



The privateers brought their prize back to the Elbe, where the booty was divided, and Memling's famous altarpiece eventually found its way to the church of St. Mary in Danzig.<sup>24</sup> Even other Hanseatic towns were shocked at Beneke's daring. Hamburg, fearing reprisals from Duke Charles, hesitated to allow the Danzigers to off-load their spoils there. The affected English merchants immediately sought the help of their king, but neither Edward's letter of protest to the duke, nor the outrage expressed by the Italian merchant community in Bruges could accomplish more than the belated and brief arrest of Hansards in Flanders.<sup>25</sup>

The depredations at sea continued,<sup>26</sup> but Beneke's notorious caper was essentially the last major engagement of the Anglo-Hanseatic War, and most certainly expedited a negotiated solution to the strife. The principals had in fact become weary of their costly and disruptive struggle. In England, Edward IV's consolidation of power had permitted him to become more independent of baronial factions, and indeed he had destroyed the enemies who once stood between him and an ambitious military alliance with the Burgundians. Such an agreement now took precedence over a maritime commercial dispute, which, in any case, had been reduced to stalemate. Royal interests now would be best served if vessels attempting to defend

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<sup>24</sup> HR. (3) III no. 176, 183; "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 736; F.L. de Roover, "A Prize of War: A Painting of fifteenth century Merchants", Bulletin of the Business Historical Society, XIX (1945), 3-12; P. Simson, op. cit., 291-94; Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik, ed. T. Hirsch and F.A. Vossberg, (Berlin, 1855), 118-22. It was also a lucrative summer for Hamburg's privateers. Kammereirechnungen der Stadt Hamburg, ed. K. Koppmann, (Hamburg, 1878), III 93-98; "Ein kort Uttoch der Wendeschen Chronicon von 801-1535", Hamburgische Chroniken in der niedersächsischer Sprache, ed. J.M. Lappenberg, (Hamburg, 1861), 258.

<sup>25</sup> O. Lienau, op. cit., 72-80. English efforts to gain restitution are outlined in Acts of Court, 68-76. For the Italian reaction see F.L. de Roover, op. cit., 3-12, and O. Meltzing, "Tomasso Portinari und sein Konflikt mit der Hanse", HGbl., XII (1906), 101-23, and for Hamburg's reluctance, W. Stark, op. cit., 201.

<sup>26</sup> HUB. X no. 218, 242, CPR. 1467-1477. 282, W.S. Unger, Iersekeroord, 224, 332.

English commerce against Hanseatic corsairs could be deployed exclusively against the French. Moreover, the speedy stabilization of England's national economy was another essential preliminary to the impending struggle with France. And, as it had been from the outset, resolve within the Hanse was also in question. Danzig, a leading protagonist, was frustrated by non-observance of the embargo on English goods by other Hanseatic towns.<sup>31</sup> Elsewhere, and especially in Lübeck, the costs of maintaining privateers and the defeats of the previous summer had also had a sobering effect.

### The Treaty of Utrecht and internal Hanseatic divisions

Already in early 1473 English envoys had been instructed to co-ordinate truces with both Denmark and the Hanse, and initiate discussions for a new trade agreement with the Burgundians. A truce with the Danes was agreed to in May, and by mid-summer negotiations with the Hansards were set to begin. A small entourage headed by the king's secretary, William Hattclyff, first went to Bruges in an initially unsuccessful attempt to conclude a new alliance with Burgundy, and then continued on to Utrecht and a meeting with the Hansards. The English were confronted there by more than two dozen Hanseatic delegates, led by Lübeck Bürgermeister Heinrich Castorp. The towns of Bremen, Hamburg, Deventer, Kampen, Danzig, Dortmund, and Münster also were represented, as were the London, Bruges and Bergen comptoirs.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> HUB. X no. 122; HR. (2) VI no. 170#5, 470#5, 482, 484, 589.

<sup>32</sup> The commissions of the English envoys are dated 4th March 1472, 10th December 1472, and 7th March 1473. PRO. E30/548, E30/1073 (12), E30/1605 (2,3,5). A truce extending from 10th June until 1st October was proclaimed in May 1473, although it evidently had little effect on the privateers. PRO. E30/1605 (4,6). The truce with Denmark is dated 1st May 1473, and was renewed for two years in 1476, and again in 1479. Diplomatarium Christierni Primi. ed. C.F. Wegener, (Copenhagen, 1856), no. 186, (Footnote Continued)



Discussions commenced on July 14th, and heated debate ensued almost immediately, as the Hansards demanded nullification of the sentence imposed by the king's Council, protesting again that they had been held accountable unjustly for crimes perpetrated by the king of Denmark. Though arguing that the judgment was both legal and just, the English were understandably rather hard pressed to explain the exemption of the Cologners. They suggested instead that discussions not dwell on the legality of the sentence, but rather concentrate on solutions to the situation at hand.<sup>33</sup> Although the initial Hanseatic request for the return of ancient privileges in England presented no obstacle, the Esterlings also expected restitution totaling £20,000, return of the Steelyard in London, and property for the establishment of permanent facilities at Boston and Lynn. The Hanseatic delegation was amenable to Hatclyff's proposal that recompense take the form of exemptions from royal customs and subsidies, but the English ambassador insisted that he was not empowered to fix the sum. Nor would he make any commitment regarding the requests for "houses" at Lynn and Boston, claiming such matters required parliamentary consent. His predicament was complicated still further by a Hanseatic stipulation that Cologne be excluded from all Hanseatic privileges in England until such time as the town might be readmitted into the Hanse.

Messengers were dispatched to England, and the talks were suspended during August, as English delegates

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(Footnote Continued)

204; 45th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, appendix 2. (London, 1885), 5; PRO. E30/1096 (1-5). For the peace initiatives of England and the Hanse see H. Buszello, "Die auswärtige Handelspolitik", op. cit.; K.A. Fowler, op. cit., and G. Neumann, "Hansische Politik und Politiker bei den Utrechter Friedensverhandlungen", Frühformen english-deutscher Handelspartnerschaft. ed. K. Friedland, (Köln Wien, 1976), 25-29.

<sup>33</sup> The report of the English ambassadors is contained in HUB. X no. 241.



awaited instructions regarding "the 3 grete difficulties, the somme which was to excessive, the howses which wer other mennes and not the kinges, the Coloniers which had not offended".<sup>34</sup> When the messengers returned and the negotiations resumed in early September, the Hansards were advised that the king's acceptance of terms would require the approval of parliament, which would not be summoned before October. Troubled by this delay, the increasingly impatient Hanseatic contingent countered with a list of essential articles "from which they wold in no wise departe", namely monetary compensation, the properties in England, and the exclusion of Cologne.<sup>35</sup> The particularly strong stand taken against Cologne reflects the resentment that the town's defection had caused within the Hanse:

Thay said finally in this wise: the citees of the Hanse be confedered and have advised among hem self to have no comune with the Coloniers ne to be joyned with thaim in no rome ne place ne to dwell, wher they shuld enjoye as grete privilegges as they have. They knew well that and thay abode in England and shuld have thaires or like privilegges, it wer certain, that thay shuld be destroyers of the Hanse.<sup>36</sup>

A truce extending to March 1474 was agreed to, with the stipulation that the diet reconvene in January, by which time the English government was expected to have formulated a firm reply. The claims of the Hanse did not go unchallenged when the delegates finally did meet for a third time in February 1474. The exclusion of Cologne was resisted, but eventually the English consented to it and thereby managed to reduce the grant of customs exemptions to £10,000. The franchises of the Cologners in England were to be terminated by August 1st. With

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., no. 241#67.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., no. 241#86; HR. (2) VII no. 44.

<sup>36</sup> HUB. X no. 241#86.

calculated reluctance Edward IV conceded to all the main Hanseatic demands in exchange for acknowledgement by the Hanse of the principle of reciprocity for English merchants. As in 1437, this was interpreted by the Hansards to mean only that the English were entitled to privileges they had been accustomed to previously. On the final day of February 1474 the agreement was concluded, signifying the end of the war between England and the Hanse.<sup>37</sup>

In the end, the Hansards had regained their ancient liberties in England, and they would not be long in re-establishing their integral place in England's overseas trade. The war had other broader implications, however, although modern scholarship has devoted scant attention to the privateering campaigns, relying instead perhaps on E.M. Carus-Wilson's suggestion that the sea war was a "half-hearted" exercise, and that prior to 1472 the English were too preoccupied with domestic political intrigue to carry the conflict to the Hansards.<sup>38</sup> In a somewhat similar vein, German scholars have, until quite recently, consistently emphasized what they viewed as a unifying and hence positive effect of the war on the Hanseatic confederation as a whole. This interpretation was pioneered by W. Stein at the turn of the century, and since then the premise that the quarrel strengthened Hanseatic resolve and resulted in an aggressive and united campaign against the English has attracted numerous adherents.<sup>39</sup> In view of the legacy of maritime

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<sup>37</sup> HR. (2) VII no. 142. Hatclyff's final instructions, dated 20th December 1473, are printed in G. Schanz, Englische Handelspolitik gegen Ende des Mittelalters. (Leipzig, 1881), II 388-97. Thereto: PRO. E30/1604, E30/1605 (7,8,9,11), and StA Hamburg Senat CI VI no. 2 vol. 6 Fasc. 7 Ino 1a, 14-40, 42-49. Ratifications were exchanged by 4th September 1475. PRO. E30/554.

<sup>38</sup> E.M. Carus-Wilson, "The Icelandic Trade", op. cit., 180; C.F. Richmond, Royal Administration. 335-45.

<sup>39</sup> See W. Stein, "Die Hanse und England : Ein hansisch-englischer Seekrieg im 15. Jahrhundert", op. cit., 29; F. Schulz, op. cit., 113; M.M. Postan, op. cit., 134; P. (Footnote Continued)



violence prior to 1468, and the obvious divisions within the Hanse that Anglo-Hanseatic disputes already had revealed, these central interpretive issues would appear to warrant re-examination.

There is little question that Edward IV acquiesced to the will of the Neville faction and the reactionary grievances of London's merchant community in the summer of 1468. Notwithstanding the dictates of domestic politics that confronted the king, the measures adopted against the Hansards lacked the coherence and perspective of previous policy, and were astonishingly insensitive to the probable long-term repercussions. Surely it was apparent at the time to all concerned that, given the history of piracy in peacetime, the severity of the council's sentence would provoke further confrontation with the Hanse, most likely on the high seas. The special treatment accorded Cologne virtually guaranteed it. Yet the perception of militant English merchants apparently did not extend beyond the long-sought opportunity to curtail the activity of their privileged foreign rivals. Initially at least, the denizen merchant community seemed content enough just to be rid of the Esterlings. Warwick and his adherents hardly intended to test the maritime prowess of the Hanse either. The earl would be well enough served if retaliation by the Esterlings destabilized North Sea commerce and ultimately diverted the attention of both Edward and Duke Charles away from France. When the inevitable Hanseatic challenge did arise in the summer of 1470, the Crown was woefully ill-prepared.

Edward was hamstrung by the renewed Lancastrian threat and Warwick's aborted insurrection. The earl had

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(Footnote Continued)

Dollinger, op. cit., 305-10, and W. Stark's partial reassessment of the Hanseatic victory, op. cit., 182-211.

escaped from England in the spring with several ships commandeered from ports in Devon and, upon being turned away from Calais by Wenlock, had set about attacking Burgundian and Breton shipping in the Channel. He was soon joined by Thomas Fauconberg with several more vessels. Such naval forces as Edward was able to muster were necessarily deployed against the fugitive earl and his menacing fleet.<sup>40</sup> Lord Howard and Earl Rivers had chased Warwick to Honfleur by mid-June and, together with a Burgundian squadron, were blockading the bay of the Seine as Neville and Louis XI plotted the restoration of Henry VI. Only after his primary adversary was holed-up in Honfleur could Rivers withdraw to the East Anglian coast to engage the marauding Esterlings. Warwick was then able to slip away to safer anchorages at Barfleur and La Hougue. Although the Anglo-Burgundian blockade of the Norman coast resumed later in the summer, it had to be lifted again in early September due to storms. By then, the Hanseatic privateers were attacking English shipping without impunity, and the "kingmaker" still possessed a substantial navy with which to launch his successful invasion of England.<sup>41</sup>

The Hanseatic privateers likely had things much their own way throughout the next year. Edward IV was not re-established in the English capital until late May 1471. But within a year he was able to consolidate his political power and change government policy toward the Hanse. He no longer was entirely susceptible to the whims of baronial factions, and there was a conscious effort to bring the conflict with the Hanse to its conclusion. Early in 1472 there were peace overtures. Then, Howard's fleet drove the Hanseatic privateers temporarily from the Flemish coast and eased pressure on

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<sup>40</sup> P.M. Kendall, op. cit., 295-302.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 303-13.



English shipping. The English victory also caused some of the less militant elements within the Hanse to become even more amenable to a peaceful settlement. Yet Howard's success and that of other armed English merchant ships<sup>42</sup> was by no means decisive. Hanseatic privateers continued to operate with or without the expressed consent of their home ports, and so long as there was no agreement between England and the Hanse, harassment of English shipping could go on almost indefinitely. Moreover, at Westminster the French again were perceived as England's real enemy, and not simply in terms of European geo-politics. During the summer of 1472 French privateers were said to have captured more than twenty English ships returning to England from northern waters with valuable fish cargoes, and the Hansards already had made their peace with France by the end of August the following summer.<sup>43</sup> So, by the time Hatclyff began bargaining with Hanseatic representatives at Utrecht, peace with the Hansards had re-emerged, together with the Anglo-Burgundian alliance, as an overriding priority of the English government. Hence, although there could be no sustained attempt to engage the Esterlings at sea until 1472, the peace initiatives of that year, Howard's efforts, and the subsequent negotiations at Utrecht were anything but half-hearted. They reflected an earnest attempt to end the conflict quickly and by whatever means possible - either militarily or through negotiation.

Professor Postan's conclusion that the Hanse's rift with England was "a joint concern of all the Hanseatic

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<sup>42</sup> HUB. X no. 111.

<sup>43</sup> "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 735; Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts existing in the Archives and Collections of Milan, ed. A.B. Hinds, (London, 1912), I 167. A ten-year Franco-Hanseatic truce was proclaimed on 23rd August 1473. HR. (2) VII no. 45; HUB. X no. 236. The negotiations leading up to this agreement had been of concern to the English, and undoubtedly spurred on the Anglo-Hanseatic peace talks at Utrecht.

towns from Westphalia to Livonia"<sup>44</sup> is essentially a reiteration of an interpretation that has been part of Hanseatic historiography since the early decades of this century. But does the evidence relating directly to reactions within the Hanse confirm this traditional supposition?

By 1468 the major Hanseatic trading centres east of Danzig already had demonstrated their independence with protectionist legislation regarding foreign contact with the Livonian hinterland. Riga, Dorpat and Reval were involved only nominally in direct trade with England, and were largely unaffected by the arrests there. All three towns specifically refused to participate in the distant privateering war, and Dorpat showed little interest in a Hanseatic embargo on English cloth either. Livonian representation at Utrecht was negligible, and Riga's refusal to ratify the new pact with England illustrates still further the relative insignificance of the Anglo-Livonian connection. Riga objected to the vague principle of reciprocity for English merchants, and was quite indifferent to the stipulation that towns declining to endorse the treaty were to be excluded from Hanseatic privileges in England. Riga's ratification came only a quarter century later, in 1500.<sup>45</sup>

The initial reluctance of the Wendish towns to resort to military means stemmed primarily from the nature of their trade, and the political rift with Cologne. Unlike the attacks on the Bay fleets in 1449 and 1458, the arrests in England in 1468 had not affected a fundamental link in the seaborne commerce of the Wendish towns. True, Lübeckers were important middlemen in the

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<sup>44</sup> M.M. Postan, op. cit., 134.

<sup>45</sup> HR. (2) VI no. 435, 1295, 1296, (3) I no. 2#3, 65#1, 83#4, 202#1, VI no. 278; HUB. XI no. 1295, 1296.



Norwegian and Icelandic fishing industries for which England remained a market, but the controversies of the 1450s already had diminished severely any comprehensive trade with England. Indeed, a principal Lübeck delegate at the Utrecht negotiations discouraged participation in an elaborate and ritualistic return of the Hansards to London, since Lübeck had no great trade there. The town's distributive trade in woollens remained keyed primarily to the Flemish market and the Bruges comptoir. Relations with Denmark and the vital Bergen comptoir also dictated responses within the Wendish community. During 1469, for example, mediation of the Dano-Swedish war was a priority.<sup>46</sup> Finally, though, the Lübeckers knew all too well the difficulty of trying to force a naval commitment against England from the rest of the Hanse, especially when the Cologne/England connection remained so strong. Lübeck's hard line against the English throughout the previous two decades had attracted markedly little support from within the confederation. When the new crisis arose, Lübeckers hesitated to commit themselves to a costly naval struggle, even though they must have realized that unless they were prepared to abdicate their pretensions to leadership of the Hanseatic community, a resolute response to the English was essential. The conservative and initially indecisive course that they did adopt not only failed to impress the as yet unstable English government, but also drew contemptuous criticism from the town's strong-willed detractors within the Hanse itself.<sup>47</sup>

Hamburg, on the other hand, carried the war to the English with belligerent enthusiasm, as the town's proximity to the crowded North Sea shipping lanes rendered

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<sup>46</sup> B. Neumann, op. cit., 58 note 40; LÜB. XI no. 433-34, 438-44, 448-51, 469, 473, 482, 490.

<sup>47</sup> HR. (2) VI no. 283; W. Stark, Lübeck und Danzig, 201.

excellent the prospects for profitable privateering ventures. What is more, Hamburg's merchants and shippers had been active in the trade to England and were severely affected by the arrests there in 1468. They sought to recoup their losses, and stood to gain further if an advantageous peace could be imposed on the English. Shippers from Bremen, already notorious for their indiscriminate provocations, also joined the fray. That they too attacked English vessels is not surprising, although theirs was ostensibly an extraneous dispute with Antwerp, and the main focus of their campaign was Brabantine shipping.<sup>48</sup>

Most seriously affected by the arrests in England were the merchants of Danzig. But even if they were banished from England, a modicum of versatility within the framework of their bulk carriage trade enabled them to dispose easily of their timber, iron, grain and flax across the Channel in Zealand, Holland and Brabant. Supported by neighbouring towns of Elbing and Thorn, the Danzigers fought the English essentially to recover their losses and avenge the council's sentence. If their privateers could eventually force England to negotiate a favourable peace, all the better. Then Danzig could well expect to recover the lucrative English market for Baltic products, and still limit reciprocal privileges for English merchants trading to Prussia.<sup>49</sup>

Finally, as far as the military aspects of the war were concerned, participation of the Westphalian towns, many of them with close trade links to Cologne, was negligible. And, if there was little unanimity regarding

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<sup>48</sup> HR. (2) VI no. 434, 467, 524, 526, and VII no. 34#141,143. For Bremen: J. Müller, op. cit., 48; G. Asaert, Die Antwerpse Scheepvaart, 248-54.

<sup>49</sup> HUB. IX no. 541. For Danzig's continued determination to limit English intrusion into the Baltic see HR. (2) VII no. 44, 63, 131-33.



the use of force, its absence was exemplified still more by the apparent failure of the other standard Hanseatic weapon, the embargo on English woollens. Dortmund resisted it outright, and Danzig repeatedly complained that significant quantities of English cloth reached Breslau during the war years through the complicity of Hanseatic towns in Westphalia.<sup>50</sup>

This range of responses, therefore, does little to verify the view that by the spring of 1469 the Hanse was "bis auf Köln wieder einig". Nor does it substantiate Postan's similar claim that Cologne's defection and the subsequent controversy "restored cohesion and unity among the Hanse's other parts".<sup>51</sup> Actually, nothing of this sort occurred. While Cologne's estrangement and England's challenge may have afforded the opportunity for consolidation within the rest of the Hanse, subsequent events merely demonstrated the confederation's inability to unite in the face of crisis. Except for Lübeck's disastrous participation in 1472, the sea war was fought by privateers from Danzig and the North Sea ports, as much intent on profiting from commercial violence as forcing a settlement with the English. Other Hanseatic towns watched quietly from a distance. Moreover, the internal divisions, now based on rather clearly defined economic concerns and political allegiances, had accentuated a serious element of artificiality in the Hanseatic confederation that was not easily erased by the Peace of Utrecht. Two years passed before Cologne was reinstated as a member town of the Hanse, thereby regaining, through renewed eligibility for Hanseatic privileges in England, her competitive capacity in the vital English trade. And

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<sup>50</sup> HR. (2) VI no. 356#62,73, 418, 472, 483#1, 484#1, 589; LUB. XI no. 659.

<sup>51</sup> F. Schulz, op. cit., 118; M.M. Postan, op. cit., 134. Also, G. Neumann, op. cit., 57 note 137.

it was not until 1476, also, that Danzig finally consented to ratify the treaty agreed upon at Utrecht.<sup>32</sup>

### The altered commercial network

The economic effects of the dispute between the Hanse and England were not necessarily all pervasive either in England or within the Hanseatic community. The most obvious impact was felt in England's east coast ports, where the absence of the Esterlings resulted in severely diminished woollen exports. The merchants of Cologne, however, continued to trade in southern England, especially in London and Ipswich/Colchester.

The status of the Cologners with regard to English customs and subsidies is shrouded in ambiguity. Throughout 1469 they persistently sought relief from the "subsidy" - presumably poundage - and by mid-February 1470 had managed, "durch swaren arbeide", to secure exemption.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, London customs enrolments for the Exchequer year 1469-70 bear this out. The 828 cloths shipped by Cologne merchants prior to mid-February were appraised at £1,672 for the purpose of calculating ad valorem poundage. Yet, no values were entered for the more than 4,000 broadcloths exported by the Cologners during the next eight months.<sup>34</sup> The high aggregate total itself

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<sup>32</sup> CPR. 1467-1477. 445; HA Köln Hanse III K 9/62-83,88; Urkundliche Geschichte des Hansischen Stahlhofes zu London, ed. J.M. Lappenberg, (Osnabrück, 1967), no. 137; HUB. X no. 528, 534, XI no. 603#10; PRO. E30/1342; HR. (2) VII no. 151, 409, (3) I no. 169. Danzig's objections to the reciprocal terms of the treaty were intentionally de-emphasized by the Hanseatic secretary in London in order to pacify the concern of the Chancellor. HR. (2) VII no. 259.

<sup>33</sup> HUB. IX no. 603#11-15, 606, 699, 700, 704.

<sup>34</sup> PRO. E356/21 10v. The figures published in E.M. Carus-Wilson and O. Coleman, op.cit., 103 are correct, although the 828 cloths exported by the Cologners from November to February have been calculated in the alien total. The totals printed in Studies, 356, do not correspond with those in the Exchequer enrolment.



suggests, perhaps, a new incentive. But a summary of the London particulars for the next year shows the Cologne merchants shipping fewer than 3,000 cloths, on which they paid the cloth custom at the Hanseatic rate of one shilling per, plus an additional 21d., for a total of 2s. 9d. on each cloth without grain, equivalent to the rate for aliens. Furthermore, the designation "alien" was applied to Cologners shipping to Ipswich in 1470, and they apparently paid both customs and subsidies on miscellaneous imports. In 1472 and again the following year they were identified as merchants of Cologne, but continued to be assessed the subsidy, evidently on cloth exports as well.<sup>53</sup>

Regardless of what privileges they may or may not have enjoyed, Cologners succeeded in maintaining a high profile in London's cloth export trade. In 1468-69, when other merchants of the Hanse were imprisoned, and the status of the Cologners both within the Hanse and in England was the subject of much controversy, "Hanseatic" cloth shipments out of London constituted less than 3% of total woollen exports from the capital. However, throughout the ensuing five-year period, which included a Hanseatic boycott of English textiles, Cologne's eventual expulsion from the Hanse, and the constant menace of Hanseatic and French privateers, the merchants of Cologne exported an average of 3,400 broadcloths each year from London. Although this was only about half the annual Hanseatic average for the immediate pre-war period, it was, under the circumstances, an achievement worthy of note. Twenty-three different Cologne merchants shipped cloth abroad from the Steelyard in 1472-73.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> PRO. E122 52/52-55, 194/19. The summary of Ipswich particulars up to 25th December 1472 (E122 52/53) includes the entry: "valor merchandise de merc' de Colon un xii di. per subs clxvi li. vi s. viii d."

<sup>54</sup> Appendix A.1.2; PRO. E122 194/20.

Most of this English cloth would have been shipped initially to the Brabant fairs, as Cologne's primary distribution network remained relatively unchanged, and there is no doubt that ports in Zealand, such as Middelburg and Veere, continued to be utilized extensively to link much of London's cross-Channel woollen trade to Lowland markets. In April 1472 Johann van Ae the younger hastened to inform the Steelyard that several cargoes sent from Colchester, including those freighted in "unsse drije smaelle scheppen" had arrived safely in Zealand, and that two more vessels would shortly be ready to depart thither. By summer's end another cloth shipment destined for Zealand, and owned by the Steelyard Cologners, was robbed en route by French pirates.<sup>57</sup> The correspondence of van Ae, together with other references to the presence of business agents in Colchester,<sup>58</sup> assigns a significance to that port not readily discernible from customs figures. Between Michaelmas 1468 and Michaelmas 1474 only about 600 cloths were customed for export from Ipswich/Colchester by Cologne merchants, albeit these were virtually the only such shipments from any port other than London. It is entirely possible, however, that some of the woollens customed at London were initially transported overland or coastwise to Colchester, and then sent to Zealand and Brabant from there with the cross-Channel convoys.

Scattered particulars of accounts for the 1468-74 period do not indicate any significant change in the basic commodity structure of the Cologne/England trade. The Cologners did not, for instance, assume a much greater role in the transshipment of bulk iron, wood, and flax to England. While traffic in these commodities remained part of their trade in raw materials, the movement of

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<sup>57</sup> HUB. X no. 111, 114; B. Kuske, Quellen. I no. 560, 577.

<sup>58</sup> HUB. X no. 111, 698.



dyestuffs was still of greatest importance. Finished wares, such as fustian, buckram, linen and steel also were essential to the trade. Antwerp shippers making regular calls at London during 1472-73 usually carried consignments of madder, soap and steel for Cologne merchants, and the same was true of those who came to Ipswich and Colchester.<sup>57</sup> There was also an extremely rare instance of a Cologner, Simon Clementz, sending a cargo to Hull. It too was brought in an Antwerp ship, in the spring of 1471, and consisted of litmus, ashes, madder, oil, hopps and herring valued at £43.<sup>60</sup>

In addition to a reduction in the cloth export trade from eastern England, there also was, of necessity, a partial restructuring of the distributive trade in bulk freight from the Baltic. Direct shipments to English ports had ceased, and cargoes of wood, tar, osmund, ashes and flax, owned for the most part by Baltic Hansards, now were off-loaded instead at Middelburg, Veere, and Arnemuiden, or transferred there from Sluis. Large consignments of these bulk commodities, customed to Englishmen, were then reshipped from the same quays in English vessels.<sup>61</sup> Also, throughout 1472-73 at least, bulk cargo belonging to Zealanders was freighted to

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<sup>59</sup> PRO. E122 52/52, Coppyn Welle (Ipswich, 21st August 1470), 194/19, Jan de Zeelander and Peter de Wale (London, 11th November 1472), Mathijs Valke (13th March 1473), Adrian van Polfiete and Jan de Zeelander (28th July 1473). Transcriptions of the entries for these Antwerp shippers are printed in G. Asaert, Documenten. 46-47, 142-49. See also B. Kuske, Quellen. II no. 563.

<sup>60</sup> PRO. E122 62/13, Claus van Cucke (Hull, 18 March 1471); G. Asaert, Documenten. 41.

<sup>61</sup> The accounts of the collectors of the Zealand water toll at Iersekeroord, Middelburg, Veere and Arnemuiden between October 1472 and October 1473 are published in W.S. Unger, Iersekeroord. 235-333. For the off-loading of Baltic cargo see especially 280-81, 306-07, 314, 330, and for its refreighting by English carriers 262, 287, 300-03. Some Baltic cargo also reached Zealand via Holland or through the agency of Holland merchants. Ibid., 249-52, 259, 320. Certificates for consignments of Cologne thread, wainscots, and Prussian chests shipped from Zealand are included in PRO. E101 129/1.

England by shippers from Veere. The inclusion of ashes, chests and wainscots "de Prucya" leaves no doubt as to the source of supply.<sup>42</sup> Aside from the obvious opportunity to expand their role in cross-Channel trade, there were other inducements to attract the Zealanders. Zealand shippers already were established in the trade to eastern England, and Veere merchants benefited from certain customs privileges there. There were reciprocal privileges for Englishmen in Veere, and in November 1471 exemption from tariffs in England was extended to merchants from Middelburg.<sup>43</sup>

The transshipment of Baltic freight via the Zealand outports certainly was not new. English merchants were active in Middelburg long before 1468, and it was not unusual for Hansards to redirect cargoes to England from the Zealand quays.<sup>44</sup> However, the disruption of direct Anglo-Baltic trade, which the Anglo-Hanseatic political dispute had precipitated, forced an increased reliance on this link, thus placing a new emphasis on flexibility within the distribution network. And, obviously, the political key to commercial flexibility in this instance lie in the Hanse's relations with Duke Charles of Burgundy and the counts of Holland and Zealand.

By 1472, then, the movement of Baltic wood, iron, and flax to England was not totally restricted. Though the overall volume of the trade in these products to English ports was reduced, Baltic freight was readily available in the Lowlands. The 1472-73 toll records for the Zealand quays show that shippers from Lynn, London, Hull and Newcastle, who off-loaded hides, lead and

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<sup>42</sup> H.J. Smit, Bronnen. (I) II no. 1657, 1668, 1684, 1697, 1710-12, 1741-42.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., no. 1643; CPR. 1467-1477. 282; HUB. VIII no. 260.

<sup>44</sup> H.J. Smit, Bronnen. (I) II no. 1381, 1418, 1456, 1497, 1538, 1544, 1549, 1587, 1597, 1602; HUB. VIII no. 244.



English cheese, were supplementing their homeward-bound wine and fruit cargoes with bulk freight, especially iron and osmund. Significantly, the value of alien and denizen merchandise paying the poundage subsidy at Hull and Lynn that year far surpassed that of previous years, while at Boston and Ipswich recovery was only marginal. The majority of other consignments not intended for northeastern England likely were carried via the shortest and perhaps safest sea route directly to London. There too, poundage totals, though probably inflated with merchandise belonging to Cologners, far exceeded even the pre-war average. And, only in London and Hull were there appreciable increases in the value of alien merchandise paying the petty custom. The non-denizen trade in East Anglian ports remained severely depressed.<sup>45</sup>

Curiously, an entry in the Middelburg toll book also suggests that, notwithstanding the self-imposed embargo on English goods, some direct commercial contact with England may have been maintained by Hansards other than the merchants of Cologne. In December 1472, Danziger Albrecht Valand, who had been arrested at the Steelyard in 1468, was listed as the merchant on whose account a cargo of eight sacks of litmus was sent to England.<sup>46</sup>

Valand and fellow Esterlings also shipped textiles directly from the Zealand outports. Cloth was transported by waggon and boat to Veere and Vlissingen, and sent abroad from Middelburg. Of course it is most unlikely that much if any of this cloth was of English manufacture. In 1469, well before the imposition of the Hanseatic boycott, an Enkhuizen ship had taken four "engl

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<sup>45</sup> Appendix A.1.1 and Studies. 331, 340, 342, 346, 348. For the Hull and Newcastle shippers in Zealand: W.S. Unger, Iersekerroord. 264, 266, 270, 275, 287, 293, 298-301, 303, 308. Zealand skippers also freighted lumber, tar and osmund for Englishmen: Ibid., 317, 326.

<sup>46</sup> W.S. Unger, Iersekerroord. 266.

laken" to Danzig,<sup>67</sup> but thereafter the port books make no specific mention of English woollens. The likely beneficiaries of the ban were the clothmakers of Brabant, Holland and Flanders. In addition to textiles of unspecified origin, cloth from Kampen, Amsterdam, Hoorn, Deventer, Leiden, Dordrecht and Flanders was carried to Danzig during the war years. While most major consignments still reached the eastern Baltic via Lübeck, there were several important shipments in 1472 arriving "uth Seeland".<sup>68</sup> In addition to the increased dependence on the Zealand quays, it is also likely that the Danzigers made more frequent use of ports in Holland. According to one contemporary chronicle, fifty of Danzig's merchant ships were in Holland in the spring of 1473.<sup>69</sup>

Whether or not any other goods of English origin reached the Baltic is largely a matter for speculation. The most likely possibility would have been lead, although seaborne lead imports into Danzig from 1468 to 1472 could hardly be termed significant. Port records offer a hint of some trade, but no hard evidence. In 1472 the merchants of Hull brought large consignments of lead to Veere, and coincidentally the only lead shipments entering Danzig arrived in three ships from Zealand. The lead formed part of mixed cargoes that also included salt, wine, and cloth from Flanders and Dordrecht. One of the shippers had traded to Hull and Lynn in the mid-1460s.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> WAPG. 300.19/3 53r., shipper Johann Segersson. For Esterlings shipping cloth in Zealand: W.S. Unger, Iersekeroord. 246, 261, 277-79, 284, 286.

<sup>68</sup> WAPG. 300.19/3 186r.-187v. For some of the major shipments arriving in Danzig from Lübeck: Ibid., 48v., 54r., 64r., 67v., 71v., 96r., 97v., 100r., 107v., 114v., 123r., 144r., 150r., 166r.

<sup>69</sup> "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op.cit., 736.

<sup>70</sup> W.S. Unger, Iersekeroord. 298; WAPG. 300.19/3 135v., 171v., 172r.; PRO. E122 62/7, 97/4, Heinrich Schroder hauling bulk freight for Danzigers to Hull (10th May 1465) and Lynn (10th September 1465).



The importance of the Lowland shippers and, in turn, the integral function of the Zealand quays as depots, transit centres and revictualling stations for the Bay salt traders also was preserved, if not enhanced during the Esterlings' forced exile from England. Fleets of four or five dozen vessels continued to reach Danzig from Brouage and the Bay from 1468 through 1470. That several of these carriers were actually Holland or Kampen vessels is verified by the Danzig chronicles. In 1470 they brought so much salt to Danzig that the market was glutted and prices fell. Only a single ship "uth der Baije" is listed in the Danzig toll book for the following year.<sup>71</sup> However, 24 of 25 vessels "von Amsterdam" and "von Campen" brought salt cargoes, and so too did seven other carriers from Holland and Zealand.<sup>72</sup>

Ports and countries listed in the Danzig accounts apparently do refer to places whence the ships actually departed. Although many shippers from the Bay are easily indentifiable as Hollanders, Zealanders and Danzigers, there is little doubt that most of them were in fact returning from the Biscay coast. Many other ships identified as coming from Zealand likely weighed anchor at the Bay as well, and had called at Middelburg, Veere, Arnemuiden, Vlissingen or Zierikzee to revictual and take on additional cargo. Or, alternatively, they refreighted salt already stockpiled at the Zealand quays. The role of the Zealand carriers in Danzig's salt trade was even more significant in 1472, when the Bay fleet, consisting

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<sup>71</sup> "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 733; WAPG. 300.19/3 20r.-29r., 54r.-66v., 98v.-105v., 149v.

<sup>72</sup> WAPG. 300.19/3 131r., 135v., 136r., 136v., 137r., 139v., 146r., 147v., 150r., 153r., 153v., 154r., 155r., 155v., 156v., 157r., 158r., 158v., 159r., 161r., 162v., 167r.

of 29 vessels, was augmented by 26 Zealand or Veere ships also laden at least partly with salt.<sup>73</sup>

The Lowland shippers were the principal non-Hanseatic carriers in the salt trade to the Baltic. It is not surprising that more of the trade should accrue to them while the Hanse's disputes with England and then with the French disrupted searoutes along the Atlantic seaboard. The deployment of Danzig ships against foreign enemies likely reduced the tonnage available on the Bay routes. Moreover, the Franco-Hanseatic dispute, which was not formally resolved until the summer of 1473, must have increased the risks to Baltic skippers in the long-distance carriage trade. By contrast, although the Hollanders and Zealanders were not necessarily safe from French privateers and the likes of Warwick, their access to supply sources for Bay salt was not unduly restricted by extraneous political feuds between the Hanse and the nation states.

The extant Danzig toll records that run from 1468 through 1472 indicate that the Bay ships seldom freighted anything except salt, and the cargoes are merely listed together with the shippers' names. Normally, however, some indication of the ownership of salt and mixed cargoes brought to Danzig from the Lowland ports is given. The vast majority of these salt shipments belonged to prominent Danzig merchants with already clearly discernible Atlantic trade connections.<sup>74</sup> And, they continued to be served by some of the agents previously active in

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 177r.-180v., 181r., 186r.-188r. Many were laden exclusively with salt, as were the nine ships reaching Danzig "uth Amsterdam". Ibid., 179r.-182v. For Hansards hauling salt cargoes to and from the Zealand ports see W.S. Unger, Iersekerroord. 310-11, 325.

<sup>74</sup> Peter Kosseler, Rolf Velsted, Tydman Valand, Peter Monk, Jacob Wulff, Gerd Overram, Tews Pelz, Peter Biscop, Jacob van Fechten, Thomas Sukow, Johann Winckeldorp, Arndt Apsthagen, Reynold Kerkhorde, Jacob Grene, Cord Schele, Johann Sidinghusen, Hans Tutting, Dirk Gunther, Jurgen Erik, Heinrich Eggerd.



trade between the eastern Baltic and England. Of the Esterlings importing both Bay salt and Baltic goods into Zealand by 1472-73, several had been involved in direct Anglo-Baltic trade prior to 1468, and at least two, Danzigers Albrecht Valand and Hans Barenbrock, were refugees from the London Steelyard.<sup>73</sup>

The Hanseatic salt fleet also included a number of Danzig skippers recently displaced from the trade with England. Paul Nymann and Albert Kloffamers, who had freighted cargo to Lynn in the mid-1460s, were hauling salt home from Amsterdam, Kampen and Zealand in 1471-72. The next year Nymann off-loaded salt in Zealand. Paul Roole also joined the salt ships during the war years and in 1475 he was still traversing the Bay route with Paul Beneke and Derick Schach. Heinrich Schroder and Kersten Kosseler, both of whom had called at English ports prior to the war, also brought salt cargoes to Hansards at Veere in 1473, and were sailing for Brouage again in the spring of 1475. Such was not the case, however, with the two Danzig captains arrested at Hull in 1468. Eler Bokelman had joined the Hanseatic privateers, while his colleague, Martin Happe, withdrew to the relative tranquility of the Danzig/Stockholm run during the Anglo-Hanseatic hostilities.<sup>74</sup>

The treaty that officially ended those hostilities was concluded in February 1474, and the immediate post-war period, leading up to Cologne's reinstatement as a member of the Hanse in the autumn of 1476, was one of transition for the Anglo-Hanseatic trade, particularly in London. The Esterlings did not begin to return to

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<sup>73</sup> W.S. Unger, Iersekerroord. 280-81, 291, 294, 306-07, 314, 320, 325, 330.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 310-11, 316; WAPG. 300.19/3 118v., 139v., 158r., 158v., 159v., 171r., 179r., 179v., 300.19/4 1,3,5,50,54,55, 300.19/5 54,56,295, 300.19/5a 12,13; "Christoph Beyers des ältern Danziger Chronik", Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum. ed. T. Hirsch, et al., (Frankfurt, 1965), V 443.

England until the summer of 1474, and although the Cologners did remain in the English capital, they were required to vacate the London Steelyard within the year.

The provisions of the Utrecht treaty, and their subsequent implementation - specifically the Hansards' exemption from royal customs and subsidies - afford a unique opportunity to delineate Cologne's contribution to London's foreign trade, as well as the Hanse's role in the regional economies of eastern England and the impact thereon of the Anglo-Hanseatic conflict. Because they had been banished from the Hanse in 1471, the merchants of Cologne were excluded from the exemptions. Hence, customs enrolments for London, where most of the Cologne trade was concentrated, distinguish Cologners from Hansards throughout the late 1470s. For this period, therefore, the volume of the Cologners' cloth exports can easily be determined within the larger "Hanseatic" total. Furthermore, since the Hansards were excused from paying the petty custom, enrolments also make the distinction between Hanseatic and other alien merchants, both in London and the east coast ports, on into the 1490s.<sup>77</sup>

The return of the Esterlings to London in 1474-75 did not compensate immediately for a severe reduction in cloth exports by denizen and Cologne merchants. However, by the following year the cloth trade had rebounded dramatically. Total broadcloth exports from the capital topped 34,000 units. The combined Cologne/Hanseatic total represented a quarter of the aggregate, and Cologners alone shipped almost 3,000 cloths. Although increases in aggregate 3d. custom totals were less startling, it is clear that the Esterlings soon reacquired a

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<sup>77</sup> As there was a ceiling of £10,000 on Hanseatic customs exemptions, it was necessary, for administrative purposes, to record values and tariffs applicable under normal circumstances. The actual revenues, however, were transferred to the London Steelyard for redistribution to those affected by the arrests of 1468.



large share of London's non-denizen trade in miscellaneous goods as well. The Hanseatic share of petty custom merchandise in the capital soared from 19% in 1474-75 to 30% the following year.<sup>78</sup>

Outside of London, effects of the prolonged dispute varied.<sup>79</sup> During the absence of the Esterlings, the value of merchandise paying the petty custom at Lynn was halved, and cloth exports became insignificant. However, the port's trade was revitalized during the 1474-1476 period, as cloth exports quickly rose to pre-war levels, with the returning Hansards accounting for 78% of the aggregate volume. Similarly, there was a surge in the value of non-denizen merchandise subject to the 3d. custom, and 30% of the trade was Hanseatic.

A rather different scenario unfolded at Boston. Throughout the period 1468-74, when Lynn's trade was reduced to a trickle, Boston's cloth exports remained relatively constant, averaging about 500 yearly, with other aliens making significant, albeit temporary inroads. But after 1474 English merchants and non-Hanseatic aliens virtually abandoned Boston's cloth trade to the Hansards, and apparently clung instead to the port's sporadic but as yet not entirely depressed wool trade. Even so, Boston's post-war cloth export trade was greatly reduced. Furthermore, the traffic in miscellaneous merchandise had declined by a full 75% during the war years, and there too recovery was by no means immediate or permanent, although the Hansards accounted for 44% of nearly £1,000 worth of petty custom goods exchanged in 1475-76.

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<sup>78</sup> Appendix A.1.4. The "Hanseatic" export totals for the war years printed in Studies, and in E.M. Carus-Wilson and D. Coleman, op. cit., actually apply only to Cologne merchants. Those for the next two years represent combined Cologne/Hanseatic figures, as Cologne technically was not part of the Hanse at this time.

<sup>79</sup> For the east coast ports see Appendix A.1.1.

At Ipswich/Colchester, despite some shipments by the free Cologners, the cloth export trade was greatly diminished during the war years. Only in 1475-76 was there a short-lived recovery to the pre-war volume, and in that year 63% of total woollen exports were customed to Hansards. The trade in goods subject to the 3d. tariff also was devastated by the Anglo-Hanseatic conflict, and except for a temporary surge in 1474-75, no post-war recovery ever materialized.

Far to the north, at Hull, the two years immediately following the Utrecht treaty saw the value of miscellaneous goods traded by Hansards and other aliens average £2,580 - double the pre-war average. In the interim it had slipped to under £850 annually. Cloth exports, which had slumped badly before the war and had averaged fewer than 700 cloths annually during the hostilities, also increased threefold, with the Hanseatic share exceeding 44%.

The post-war resumption of trade out of England is also reflected in the Danzig port accounts.<sup>80</sup> In 1474 only two ships voyaged from Hull to Danzig, but the next year saw seven vessels reach the eastern Baltic from England, and in 1476 there were at least twelve. Principal cargoes consisted of cloth, lead, and small consignments of Gascon wine, augmented by salt (including Bay salt) and Spanish wine. However, among the merchants listed with the cargo inventories only a half dozen non-German names appear, and almost all of the major woollen cargoes belonged to Hansards. The only certain English carrier was Lynn skipper Robert Bees, who came

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<sup>80</sup> WAPG. 300.19/5 esp. 81, 121-23, 130, 137, 186, 206, 249, 256-57, 279, 281, 289-90, 297, 299, 304. The Danzig toll records for the period 1474 through 1476 are edited in V. Lauffer, "Danzigs Schiffs-und Waarenverkehr am Ende des 15. Jahrhunderts", Zeitschrift des Westpreussischen Geschichtsvereins, XXXIII (1894), 1-44. However, the published totals, at least for the English trade, contain a number of apparent errors. See revised figures in Appendix A.1.4.



to Danzig in 1475 and again in 1476. His presence there represents the extent of an apparently modest effort to re-establish direct English participation in the Baltic trade in the mid-1470s. But this is hardly surprising, for the English were placed at a disadvantage almost from the outset. Much of their merchant marine was requisitioned in 1475 for Edward IV's planned invasion of France. This effectively permitted the Esterlings to reassert their dominance of the shipping lanes between England and the Baltic, uncontested. And the timing was crucial, since the resumption of trade to the Baltic after such a prolonged disruption, together with an impending war against the French, augured well for the traffic in wood, iron and grain.

#### Reconciliation and the turbulent 1480s

Throughout the late 1470s, while the relationship between England and the Hanse remained cordial, profound political changes on the continent continued to alter the structure of international trade. The great English invasion force crossed to Calais in the summer of 1475. However, when the expected military support of the Burgundians was not forthcoming, Edward accepted Louis XI's offer of a seven-year truce and a generous pension, and took his army back to England. In 1477 Duke Charles was slain at Nancy, and nothing ever came of the grand schemes of the Anglo-Burgundian military alliance. A new treaty of mercantile intercourse between England and Burgundy was soon agreed to,<sup>81</sup> but for more than a decade after the duke's death the Burgundian territories, and especially Flanders, were threatened with French invasion and ravaged by civil war and revolts against the new Hapsburg archduke, Maximilian. By 1485 the disruptions

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<sup>81</sup> PRO. E30/561, 568.

had caused many Hanseatic and Genoese merchants in Bruges to evacuate to Antwerp, where the Hanse's extensive trading freedom had recently been confirmed for an extended period. Three years later, in an apparently deliberate move to avenge his temporary imprisonment in Bruges, Maximillian ordered other foreign merchants there to transfer to Antwerp also. By the time the last uprisings were suppressed in 1492 the cloth trade of Bruges and the other Flemish drapery towns was severely diminished.<sup>82</sup> The cloth manufacturing towns in Picardy, moreover, had long since passed to French control.

The disruption of the trade of Bruges and the exodus of the foreign merchant communities greatly benefited Antwerp and Bergen op Zoom and their trade in English cloth. Subsidiary dyeing and finishing industries continued to develop in Antwerp, and the exchange of finished cloth for the precious metals and manufactured wares of the southern German territories was becoming a cornerstone of a new prosperity there.<sup>83</sup> And the transit trade of Cologne, which linked London and the Brabant fairs with Frankfurt and points south and west, was a central feature of this newly modified commercial network.

The Hansards' main competitors in the English woollen trade at the Brabant fairs were the London and York mercers and merchant adventurers, who continued to oppose the privileged status of their foreign rivals in England.<sup>84</sup> But in 1480 their repeated complaints, which again focused on a perceived lack of reciprocal rights in

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<sup>82</sup> J.H. Munro, "Bruges and the abortive Staple in English Cloth", Revue Belge de philologie et d'histoire, XLIV (1966), 1146-49. For the extension of Hanseatic privileges at Antwerp: HUB. X no. 861, 886; ARA. CC. cartons, series I, 1-4, no. 189.

<sup>83</sup> J.H. Munro, op. cit., 1146-49.

<sup>84</sup> Acts of Court. 136-37.



Hanseatic territory, failed to secure royal support. Again in December 1482 merchants from York were preparing to seek a "remede" against the Hansards in the coming parliament, for, it was claimed, "the Estyrlyngs cumys in to thys pairts, and has thair fre bying and fre selyng in thys land, and...ynglish marchaunts cannot so hav in thar cuntreis...."<sup>85</sup> A list of more specific grievances, likely dating from the 1480s and perhaps compiled in support of the initiative in parliament, accused the Esterlings of taking the cash they received for their bulk freight out of northern England and not reinvesting in commodities available there. Strangers coming to York dealt only with the Esterlings, who allegedly knew every market town and village from Newark to Carlisle. The York men further complained that English merchants in Hanseatic (sic. Baltic) towns were not allowed to do business with strangers or to sell retail, as their German counterparts could do in England.<sup>86</sup> Early in the new year, however, Hanseatic merchants were once again among those exempted from a subsidy on aliens that was granted by parliament to help finance the war against the Scots. Nor was there any discernible change in the Crown's policy toward the Hansards following the death of Edward IV. Richard III reconfirmed their privileges. So too did Henry VII in 1486, over objections from the merchants of Hull, York, Lynn and London.<sup>87</sup>

The protests lodged by English merchant groups centred specifically on the Hansards' preferential customs and subsidies rates in England, and their dominance

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<sup>85</sup> York Civic Records, ed. A. Raine, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, XCVIII (1938), 66.

<sup>86</sup> The York Mercers and Merchant Adventurers 1356-1917, ed. M. Sellers, Surtees Society Publications, CXXIX (1918), 107-08, also HUB, XI no. 19.

<sup>87</sup> HUB, X no. 1149-50; HR, (3) II no. 30-33; CPR, 1476-1485, 353; Urkundliche Geschichte des hansischen Stahlhofes zu London, ed. J.M. Lappenberg, no. 144.

of the Bergen and Icelandic fisheries. Additionally, the English claimed to have been deprived of their "alder privilegien und vrijheiden" in Hanseatic towns, especially in Danzig, where there was mention of dwellings in times past.<sup>88</sup> While this latter concern was related only indirectly to the traffic over Antwerp and Bergen op Zoom, and thence to eastern markets, of greatest importance were the differential tariffs in England, which still placed denizen merchants at a disadvantage in their own cloth export trade. But neither the revocation of the entrenched Hanseatic exemption from poundage nor a reduction in rates applicable to native merchants could be expected from the king, so again blame was focused instead on the Hansards themselves. How deeply they had come to be resented in some quarters is indicated by one of the contemplated remedies. Little more than a decade after the agreement at Utrecht, aggrieved London mercers evidently viewed open conflict as a viable alternative to the prevailing situation:

Und off men herna nyet horen en weulde des doch nyet to hopen steyt, alsdan so were beter vor alle dat rijke van Englant to vorsoken de beteringe und remedie hijervan dorch openbayr orloge und strijde, it costete dat rijke van Englande wat it weuld....<sup>89</sup>

On the high seas too, the comparative tranquility of the immediate post-war period had faded quickly, and the future hardly boded well for any harmonious relationship between England and the Hansards. Lübeckers and Bristol fishermen skirmished off Iceland. A Scottish vessel carrying grain and jewels from Leith to Flanders was taken by English pirates in 1476, and at least part of

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<sup>88</sup> HUB. XI no. 18 (esp. #2,4,6,8), 19.

<sup>89</sup> From the Steelyard secretary's summary of the English complaints, HUB. XI no. 18#10. The condemnation of the Hansards was by no means unanimous, however, as once again the clothmen of Bristol rallied to their support. Acts of Court. 294-95.



the cargo belonged to merchants from Lübeck. That same summer the 'Jacob' of Hamburg, laden with £600 worth of fish from Iceland, ran aground off Hartlepool en route to London, and was attacked and destroyed by bandits. A similar incident, involving a Danzig ship stranded near Yarmouth, occurred in 1477.<sup>90</sup> Yet, relative to the bedlam of past decades, and despite the turmoil in the Hapsburg Lowlands and quarrels between Holland and the Wendish towns that lingered on until the close of the 1470s, incidents of piracy involving Hanseatic and English ships were at worst sporadic until renewed Anglo-Scottish hostilities ushered in another sustained disruption of the seaborne trade.<sup>91</sup> In 1482 no fewer than four Hanseatic vessels were plundered by English warships ostensibly deployed against the Scottish foe.<sup>92</sup>

The Anglo-Danish truce, so vital to England's Baltic trade aspirations, was renewed twice during the late 1470s. But when young King John inherited the Danish kingdom in May 1481, England had acquired yet another enemy. And, within a short time John's use of Esterling mercenaries in attacks on English shipping increased antipathy and led to new charges of Hanseatic collusion. The violence soon escalated, as Hansards from the Bruges comptoir were accused of arming Hanseatic pirates and receiving plundered goods. Representatives from the Steelyard were again summoned to appear before the

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<sup>90</sup> For piratical encounters of the 1470s see CPR, 1467-1477, 605, 1476-1485, 23, 49; HUB, X no. 489, 526; "Die Chronik Christians von Geren", op. cit., 372; R. Meissner, "Eine isländische Urkunde", HGbl., XIII (1907), 245-64.

<sup>91</sup> For the Wendish disputes with Holland: HR, (3) I no. 7-18, 216-30; HUB, X no. 537, 539, 545, 616.

<sup>92</sup> HUB, X no. 975, 988, 994, XI no. 1303; HR, (3) I no. 435#7, II no. 509#37, 510.

Chancellor to answer allegations regarding depredations against English shipping.<sup>73</sup>

The situation worsened rapidly, particularly in Hull and London. In the north, improprieties by customs and court officers were augmented with retaliatory arrests and attacks on Baltic ships. A series of indentures between the Crown and various towns and individuals in 1487 required virtually every major English port to arrest the spoils of pirates and ensure that English skippers kept the peace with the king's subjects and allies. With accusations against Esterling mercenaries proliferating in northern England, this new delegation of responsibility for sea keeping likely exacerbated the already aggravated relationship between England and the Baltic Hansards.<sup>74</sup> By early 1488 the hostility in Hull had become so intense that the London comptoir was obliged to prohibit Hansards from going there, as their physical safety could not be guaranteed.<sup>75</sup> The arrest of Danzigers Johann Slagetin and George Timmermann in 1489 for alleged participation in a Danish attack on Hull ships is noteworthy in view of the threats issued by Hull against Prussian shipping, and reports of the forced sale of Hanseatic goods there. The plight of the two mariners aroused considerable indignation among the Esterlings, because they spent an inordinately long period of time in prison, despite the sworn testimony of at least two dozen Danzig burghesses that they were not serving the Danes at the time of the robbery. According to their own petition to the chancellor, Slagetin and Timmermann came to England aboard a Danzig merchant ship, and were put ashore

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<sup>73</sup> HUB. XI no. 24, 79; HR. (3) II no. 103-08; 45th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, appendix 2. (London, 1885), 5.

<sup>74</sup> PRO. E101 55/17, E163 9/37.

<sup>75</sup> HUB. XI no. 636; HR. (3) II no. 161#12, 193, 217#20,28, 220, 223, 224, 509; PRO. C1/59/302, C1/64/1105; Appendix A.3.2.



at the Humber to hire a pilot to guide the vessel to Lynn. They insisted that their arrest at Hull came about only after it became apparent to the local authorities that the ship did not intend to stop there. They were still in custody in the summer of 1490, when another Danzig captain, Nicholas Klinckabel, was forcibly diverted to Hull from his intended destination of Lynn.<sup>96</sup> Other confrontations at sea, including several skirmishes with French and Scottish ships, now occurred with alarming frequency.<sup>97</sup>

The atmosphere in London, where the Steelyard merchants were vexed by restrictions on the export of unfinished cloth and the trade in Cologne silk, was hardly better.<sup>98</sup> There too ships from the Baltic were seized, crew members injured, and cargoes spoiled. Established merchants from Cologne were accused of abetting piracy, and had their goods attached at Calais. A Hanseatic messenger was assaulted on the road to Dover, and in 1490 Cologners resident at the London Steelyard were waylaid in broad daylight while leaving church. Gerhard van

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<sup>96</sup> PRO. C1/172/16; HR. (3) II no. 309, 342-43, 359, 510#36. For Klinckabel see HR. (3) II no. 509#69,83, 510#42; PRO. E122 63/8.

<sup>97</sup> CPR. 1476-1485. 425, 1485-1494. 105; HR. (3) II no. 117-18, 205#6, 226, 509-11; HUB. X no. 1149-50, 1201, 1225, XI no. 131, 187, 236, 265, 393, 443; H.J. Smit, Bronnen. (2) I no. 9; Z.W. Sneller and W.S. Unger, Bronnen. I no. 354-55, 361-64, 366, 369, 374; BL. Additional 15505 f.21. Also, a fierce privateering campaign waged against Hanseatic and Lowland shippers by Philip of Kleves endangered Hanseatic trade with England even further. A ship bound from Boston to Danzig was seized in 1490, and the following summer at least two more Hanseatic vessels employed in the cross-Channel trade between London and Zealand were pirated as well. HUB. XI no. 505-06; "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 782.

<sup>98</sup> HUB. XI no. 126-27, 594; HR. (3) II no. 109-10, 161#3,10, 178#10, 298-300; B. Kuske, Quellen. II no. 1054, 1205, 1206#6,27,28,33-35; Statutes of the Realm. II 506, 520, 534. A summary of the various restrictions is contained in F. Schulz, op. cit., 139-41.

Wesel's younger brother Peter was mortally wounded, but the assailants, though identified, went unpunished.<sup>99</sup>

Of the various prohibitions that restricted and annoyed the Steelyard merchants during the 1480s, the most serious was a ban, imposed late in 1486, on exports to the Hapsburg Lowland ports. The initial scope of the restriction, as well as the rationale for it are unclear. Complaints from the Cologners implied that it was directed specifically at them, while other Hansards appeared to be exempt. Henry VII informed the Lübeck Hansetag in October 1487 that the restriction would be lifted, but evidently it was not. It was in effect the following summer, as Hansards were required to submit affidavits to the treasurer promising not to ship to ports under the allegiance of the king of the Romans. Until it was rescinded in 1489, the measure closed Antwerp and the rest of the Hapsburg Lowlands to direct English woollen exports, and the resultant costly re-routing of traffic over Hamburg, Groningen and Kampen compounded the discontent within the Hanse, above all amongst the disgruntled Cologners.<sup>100</sup>

Both of the principal Hanseatic sub-groups in England - the Baltic shippers and the merchants of the Steelyard - were faced with difficult predicaments stemming in part from their peculiar roles within the commercial framework. Passage through the Sound was now crucial to the international trade of Prussia and the Danzig staple, and was not to be jeopardized willfully by any

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<sup>99</sup> PRD. C1/64/71; HUB. XI no. 292-93, 295, 299, 333; HR. (3) II no. 302-03, 306-08, 387, 508#35, 509#1-27; "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 780. For the harassment of the Cologners see B. Kuske, Quellen. II no. 1206, and for the attack on Peter van Wesel et al., Ibid., no. 1206#42.

<sup>100</sup> HR. (3) II no. 109-10, 161, 191-92, 228-33; H. Buszello, "Köln und England 1468-1509", Mitteilungen aus dem Stadtarchiv von Köln, LX (1971), 455-56; HUB. XI no. 183, 233, 243. The sworn obligations of 1487 were required not only of Cologners, but from other Steelyard merchants as well.



careless challenges to the Danish king over his attacks on English shipping or his use of Danzig mercenaries. With the Danes scrutinizing all foreign shipping at Helsingor, Danzigers risked arrest for freighting goods belonging to Englishmen, and were understandably reluctant to antagonize King John any further.<sup>101</sup> Paradoxically, the wrath of the discontented merchants of northern England was directed largely at the Baltic skippers, who were endeavoring, albeit in their own interest, to maintain rather than eliminate the tenuous trade link with England.

The vulnerability of the Hansards in London was no less acute. Again, it is most unlikely that they were directly involved in the robberies of English ships, as the potential risks to the vital London trade would have outweighed by far any possible benefits. Though they enjoyed relative autonomy in affairs pertaining to the Steelyard, they could do little to affect the demeanor of gangsters on the high seas. And so, they remained at the mercy of the xenophobic element in the capital, which appeared to require little enough by way of pretext to vent frustrations against them, in forms ranging from parliamentary lobbying aimed at the curtailment of Hanseatic freedoms, to simple physical intimidation. There was a natural reliance on the Hanseatic leadership, such as it was, to mount a political defence of the Hansards in England and to bring pressure to bear on the true offenders.<sup>102</sup> Unfortunately, so far as the London comptoir was concerned, Lübeck, Danzig, and other

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<sup>101</sup> As early as 1482 the Danes were stopping and searching Danzig ships for English cargoes, and at least one vessel was distrained. King John would consent to its release only if Danzig would agree to discontinue trade to England. HUB. X no. 997, 1003, 1036-37, 1112; HR. (3) I no. 546#165,178,180, 547#36,38, 550#14-20, 554#8; "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 745. The trade continued, of course, and the ship apparently was still in Danish custody in March 1484.

<sup>102</sup> HR. (3) II no. 106, 114-24, 302-03, 306-11, 313.

Hanseatic towns often appeared more concerned with the redistribution of English customs rebates than with the precarious position of the Steelyard community itself.<sup>103</sup>

By 1490 the situation of the Hansards in England was indeed desperate. Initially, a new Anglo-Danish treaty, concluded early in the year, offered hope of an end to the naval confrontations, and a lessening of tensions between England and the Hanse. It guaranteed mutual freedom of navigation and commerce, and permitted the English to trade to Iceland upon obtaining licences every seven years from the Danish Crown.<sup>104</sup> But the seizures of Hanseatic vessels by the English continued, and the government turned a deaf ear to Cologne's appeals against attachments. Along with the harassment in London, this was interpreted by Cologne as another deliberate attempt to force her Englandfahrer out of England. In response, the Steelyard archive and treasury were evacuated,<sup>105</sup> and the Lübeck Hansetag, which convened in October, recommended an immediate and severe reduction in the volume of Hanseatic trade to England. With crisis looming ever closer, the assembly also heeded the fears of the beleaguered Steelyard merchants, and consented to a conference with English envoys in the new year.<sup>106</sup>

Following a winter of preparation, negotiations began rather inauspiciously at Antwerp in late May

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<sup>103</sup> HR. (3) I no. 129, 205, 264-65, 299, 346-47, 383, 441, 609.

<sup>104</sup> CPR. 1485-1494. 321; 45th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, appendix 2. (London, 1885), 5-6.

<sup>105</sup> HUB. XI no. 292-93, 333-34. For attacks on Hanseatic shipping in 1490 see HR. (3) II no. 510#40-46, and for the evacuation of the Steelyard archive, F. Irsigler, "Die Lübecker Veckinchusen und die Kölner Rinck", Hanse in Europa : Brücke zwischen den Märkten 12.-17. Jahrhundert. (Köln, 1973), 324.

<sup>106</sup> HR. (3) II no. 339-40, 345, 357, 360, 374-87, 399, 406-07.



1491.<sup>107</sup> The English delegation, led by jurists Edmund Martin and William Warham, had been a month late in arriving, and their expressed desire to treat only with delegates from Lübeck, who ostensibly represented the entire Hanse, was an affront to other assembled emissaries from Hamburg, Danzig, Münster, Deventer and Nijmegen. Meanwhile, the contingent of Cologners was unhappy that Lübeck should be heading the Hanseatic delegation in the first place, and made no secret of their displeasure. Closer to the real issues on the agenda, the Danzigers were urged from within the Hanseatic membership to adopt a more conciliatory posture regarding the familiar English complaints about unfair restrictions at the Prussian staple.

Detailed summaries of the injuries and transgressions committed during the previous decade - most relating to piracy, robbery or extortion - were exchanged, but the dominant issue to emerge from the ensuing four weeks of talks was that of English access to Prussia. Consequently, the onus for any agreement shifted largely to the representatives from Danzig, whose mandate stipulated that English status at the Prussian staple should remain "glick anderen copluden uther hanse in gliker wisse".<sup>108</sup> The English were reminded that the granting of trading privileges in Prussia was not within Danzig's jurisdiction, but rather a matter for the king of Poland and his vassal, the master of the Teutonic knights. Insofar as trade in Danzig was concerned, however, the English were offered as much freedom as they were supposed to have had for the past sixty years. They were welcome to come to the Artushof, but like other non-Hansards, their direct commercial contact with foreigners, such as the Russians,

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<sup>107</sup> Unless specifically noted, the following summary of the Antwerp talks is based on the Hanseatic records of the diet in HR. (3) II no. 496-511.

<sup>108</sup> HR. (3) II no. 502#3-7.

Poles, Lithuanians and Prussians who also traded at Danzig, would be confined to the Dominikmarkt each summer.

Although the Danzigers did not view them as new concessions, these articles became the basis of a notarial instrument, drafted on June 22nd, which ultimately satisfied the English negotiators.<sup>109</sup> They had, apparently, achieved all they really wanted. The two sides then agreed to curtail the open hostility for one year while unresolved issues were given further study, after which time the meetings were to reconvene. In the interim, although the restrictions on the export of unshorn English cloth were not lifted, all existing Hanseatic privileges and exemptions in England were to be respected. Notwithstanding the manifold grievances of both parties, an extremely volatile situation was defused at Antwerp mainly through Danzig's recognition of the fourth article of the Utrecht treaty. In the end, the issue of the Prussian staple was the key to reconciliation, just as it also had been, perhaps, to the preceding half decade of violence and intimidation.

It was scarcely by chance that the Baltic trade and, hence, England's relations with Denmark and the Hanse became the focus of concern for the Crown precisely when

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<sup>109</sup> HR. (3) II no. 504; Caſpar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik, ed. T. Hirsch and F.A. Vossberg, (Berlin, 1855), 123-24; F. Schulz, op. cit., 143. With regard to the past status of Englishmen at the Artushof, if they had been denied access, it was only for a brief time, as Schulz suggested. Citing the early membership register of one of the fellowships (Banken) who met at the Artushof, P. Simson confirmed that Englishmen were indeed welcomed there soon after 1483: "...von ausserhalb des Reiches stellten sich schon früh Gäste ein, die ebenfalls als vollberechtigte Mitglieder in die Banken eintraten:...1483 bei der Reinholdsbank je zwei Stockholmer und Aalborger, bald auch Engländer und Russen". P. Simson, Der Artushof in Danzig und seine Bruderschaften, die Banken. (Aalen, 1969), 43. Anyway, although the Artushof was by this time a central meeting place for merchants in Danzig, foreigners must not have relied too much on actual physical admittance to the hall. That was not automatic. Furthermore, the Artushof was destroyed by fire in December 1476, and its reconstruction took the better part of five years. Yet this did not seem to inhibit the merchants of Lynn trading to Danzig, to say nothing of the Danzigers themselves.



English trade to the Brabant fairs was restricted. While maritime depredations characterized the entire decade, initial proposals for a conference of English and Hanseatic representatives coincided with Henry VII's prohibition on cloth exports to the Hapsburg territories. By that time, in relation to the overall volume of denizen woollen exports from England, Danzig had become a secondary market, and was likely to remain such, so long as England's Brabantine connection could be maintained. However, by the same token, when political disagreements threatened to hinder the cross-Channel traffic in cloth for prolonged periods, woollen exporters and eventually the government looked to old alternatives, such as the eastern Baltic.

Though considerable, the obstacles standing in the way of an immediate shift in the trade were not insurmountable. The most obvious hindrance was the escalating cycle of violence in northern waters, which was partly a byproduct of England's feuds with Scotland and Denmark. Moreover, safe passage through the Sound, as well as access to the much coveted Icelandic fisheries, also hinged on relations with the Danes. By the Anglo-Danish accord of 1490, then, England achieved the first of two essential prerequisites for any new commercial initiative in the Baltic. And this was all the more timely, in light of deteriorating Dano-Hanseatic relations. The second necessary precondition was the articulation and confirmation of English trading rights at the Prussian staple.

A decade of piracy and harassment provided the backdrop for the meetings at Antwerp. Even as the talks were in session English captains were attacking Hanseatic salt ships returning from Brouage.<sup>110</sup> But the ultimate

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<sup>110</sup> "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik" op. cit., 783.

goal and eventual success of the English negotiators was the clarification of the status of Englishmen trading to Prussia. It is tempting to speculate, therefore, to what extent the harassment of Hansards and the strict enforcement of protectionist statutes on silk imports and cloth exports during the late 1480s might have been intended to induce the convening of an Anglo-Hanseatic conference. Certainly, a broad range of Hanseatic interests had been affected in England, and many of the aggrieved Hansards were far removed from the maritime incidents that so angered many Englishmen. Of interest too in this respect is Henry VII's correspondence to the Hansetag in 1487, wherein he not only proposed a joint conference, but also offered an assurance that his ban on direct exports to the Lowlands was about to be lifted. The embargo had hurt English merchants as well, yet when the Hanseatic towns procrastinated during the next year on the matter of an Anglo-Hanseatic meeting, the restriction remained in effect. In any event, a multitude of other restrictions, the diligence of local sheriffs, and a pervading air of hostility in England made the situation of the Hanseatic Englandfahrer difficult in the extreme. The end result was the conference at Antwerp. And, not surprisingly, when the English delegation there inevitably raised the issue of trading rights in Prussia, there was some pressure from within the Hanseatic community to ensure that Danzig was not entirely unaccommodating.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> HR. (3) II no. 496#267,270; F. Schulz, op. cit., 142.



## VI ANGLO-HANSEATIC COMMERCIAL RELATIONS TO 1491

### England's Baltic trade

The war between England and the Hanse in the early 1470s had brought about the complete disruption of English trade to the Baltic, and also forced important modifications in the Hanseatic trade network, particularly with regard to Zealand and the Brabant fairs. The permanence of these changes was tested over the next fifteen years, and the ramifications are mirrored in the development of English overseas commerce and the emergence of new and distinct patterns within the Hanseatic trade. According to the established traditions of English historiography for the period, the war and the Treaty of Utrecht were the death knell for English trade to the Baltic in the fifteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Yet, if the absence of the English from the Baltic trade extended beyond the mid-1470s, it must have had a significant effect on the regional economies of eastern England. Moreover, if there was a prolonged absence, was it the result of restrictions rooted in Danzig's protectionist paranoia, or might it somehow have been linked to a newly evolving commercial network that had been necessitated, in part, by the recent Anglo-Hanseatic conflict?

In northern England, customs records for Hull and Newcastle, incomplete as they are for the late 1470s and the 1480s, do not suggest a very significant role in direct Anglo-Baltic commerce for local English merchants. It was the Danzigers who exchanged bulk cargo at the Tyne and Humber ports, primarily for coal and lead, and they did not carry freight for indigenous traders. While the

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<sup>1</sup> M.M. Postan, op. cit., 101, 138; J.L. Bolton, op. cit., 310; J.D. Mackie, The Earlier Tudors, 1485-1558. (Oxford, 1952), 221.

York mercenaries complained of restrictions in Hanseatic towns, the accusations by Hull shippers against Esterling pirates and mercenaries do not imply that vessels from the Humber were attempting to trade to Danzig. The most controversial incident involved English ships returning from southern waters. Other victims were, for the most part, shipping to either Zealand or Iceland.<sup>2</sup> The Icelandic ventures, moreover, would have automatically courted trouble with the Danes and the Esterlings in their service.

Elsewhere a much different pattern was established. At Boston, English skippers off-loaded fish and refreighted cloth for Hansards, but here again the connection likely was with Iceland. For some years during the 1480s no Hanseatic goods at all were customed at Boston, while in others large consignments of Baltic forest products were discharged from Danzig ships exclusively for Hanseatic merchants.<sup>3</sup> This contrasted sharply with the situation at nearby Lynn. In 1475 Lynn merchant/shipper Robert Bees brought cargo to and from Danzig for Esterlings and fellow Lynn merchants John Belles and John Biston. He also returned to Danzig in 1476. A year later, another English vessel, homeward bound from Prussia, with goods belonging to English and Danzig merchants, was wrecked by storm off the Pommeranian coast. The 'Christofer' of Lynn was in Danzig in 1479, and the link was still intact the following year, when two Lynn vessels returned home laden exclusively with Baltic cargo for Lynn and Danzig merchants. A third apparently was pirated en route.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> HR. (3) II no. 511#11-14,16,20-61; PRO. E122 63/1,2,8, 107/61, 108/2.

<sup>3</sup> PRO. E122 10/22,24,25,26, 11/2,3,4,6,8.

<sup>4</sup> WAPG. 300.19/5 123, 206, 300.19/5a 57; PRO. C1/32/356 (see Appendices A.1.4 and A.4.4); PRO. E122 97/17,18: shippers John Melborn and William Passheley coming to Lynn in mid-November 1480. See also HUB. X no. 595, 1139.



For the next half decade there is a paucity of customs evidence, but presumably English shipping to the Baltic was again severely restricted by the Danes. Nevertheless, combined cargoes belonging to Esterlings and denizens, carried by English as well as Hanseatic vessels, attest to the maintenance of the tenuous trading ties between Lynn and the Danzig staple throughout the 1480s. Bees and indigenous merchant Richard Peper exported cloth from Lynn in the spring of 1484 in a Hamburg ship that also carried cloth for Danzigers. In light of Bees' previous and subsequent involvement in the Baltic trade, it is entirely possible, though not certain, that the cargoes were destined for Danzig, either via Hamburg and Lübeck, or directly via the Umlandfahrt. Still other Lynn merchants freighted a cargo of cloth, coverlets, caps, needles and pins with Danzig skipper Laurence Fredeland, while Lynn captain Roger Petman off-loaded a wax consignment for Danziger Albrecht Valand. Again in 1487 Bees freighted both import and export merchandise aboard a ship from Hamburg, and also was one of three indigenous merchants and a pair of Danzigers exporting woollens with Lynn merchant/shipper John Brekersley. The cargo of wood and fish oil with which Brekersley returned to Lynn also was co-owned by denizens and Hansards. Before the end of the decade traders from Lynn complained of the robbery of other cargoes shipped from Prussia, but in 1490 and 1491 Brekersley, Bees, and others were still bringing bulk freight to Lynn in Danzig ships.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, John Belles and another Lynn merchant, Thomas Carter, had helped negotiate the new Anglo-Danish

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<sup>3</sup> PRO. E122 98/1,2 (shipper Elryk Crewer, April 1484), 98/5 (shipper John Brekersley, May and August 1487, and Lutkyn Smyth, May 1487), 98/7,8 (shipper Laurence Fredeland, May and July 1488), 98/9 (Hans Laurence, May and June 1489), 98/10 (Hans Laurence, May and June 1490), 98/11 (Hans Laurence, October 1490 and April 1491, Clays Mors, September 1491); HR. (3) II no. 511#1-8,15,18-20.

mercantile treaty of 1490, which, among other considerations, provided for freedom of navigation for English shipping.<sup>6</sup>

The extent to which Londoners and other merchants from southern England may have been involved in post-war trade to Danzig is difficult to determine, since very few complete customs particulars survive for the capital or for Ipswich/Colchester. No indigenous merchants shared in the large bulk cargoes discharged from Hamburg and Danzig ships at southern English ports in the early 1480s, nor again a decade later. It is impossible to say where similar cargoes carried by denizen shippers may have been picked up, but it is apparent that Londoners and their colleagues in Essex and Suffolk did not employ Hanseatic carriers to bring bulk freight directly from the Baltic.<sup>7</sup>

From 1475 through 1491 there was, then, a perceptible reorientation of eastern England's overseas commerce vis à vis the Hanse. The port of Boston still served the Hanseatic Bergenfahrer, and some English carriers were employed in the fish trade to Norway and Iceland. Active English participation in the Baltic trade apparently reverted to a small nucleus of merchants and skippers from neighbouring Lynn, who used both Hanseatic and English shipping to maintain connections with the Danzig staple. For the merchants of northern England, however, the trend was away from the Baltic routes. The Esterlings continued to supply Hull and Newcastle with

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<sup>6</sup> 45th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, appendix 2. (London, 1885), 5-6.

<sup>7</sup> PRO. E122 52/58, 53/3,4,6, 78/9, 194/24,25. However, according to the Danzig chronicle of Caspar Weinreich, the ship seized by the Danes in 1482 for allegedly attempting to smuggle an English merchant and his goods through the Sound, was bound for London. Perhaps, then, the merchant in question was a Londoner. "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 745. Thereto: HUB. X no. 997, 1003, 1036-37, 1112.



essential forest products and iron, but the denizen trading community was drawn more toward the lucrative cross-Channel trade to Zealand and the Brabant fairs.

An essential consideration in assessing this post-1475 modification of England's overseas trading network and its significance, is that the only cloth exporting centre of national importance north of Ipswich/Colchester was Hull. The port served the Yorkshire woollen manufacturers, and as the cloth export industry developed during the second half of the fifteenth century, merchant adventurers from Beverley, York and Hull, though still conscious of the Baltic market, were drawn naturally to the great fairs at Antwerp and Bergen op Zoom. That they already relied heavily on the Lowland market is reflected in depressed cloth export totals for Hull during the Burgundian embargo on English woollens in the mid-1460s. The ensuing five-year conflict with the Hanse, during which English exporters were cut off totally from the alternative Baltic market, accelerated the shift to Brabant, where English cloth and lead could be exchanged readily for bulk raw materials, luxury goods, and manufactured wares. Commercial links between northern England and the Zealand ports thus became more firmly established during the war years, and after the hostilities between England and the Hanse had ended there was little incentive to alter the new status quo. True, it no longer was necessary to fetch bulk cargo stockpiled at the Zealand quays, since the Esterlings again supplied Hull directly from Danzig. But the merchants of Yorkshire were now attracted by a diverse range of goods available in Brabant, and what they probably perceived as a more secure and dynamic market for their cloth and lead than the distant Danzig staple. Besides, in the Baltic, English cloth exporters would be forced to compete in a long-distance trade not only with the Hansards, but also with the shippers from Brabant, Zealand and Holland, who already had achieved a foothold. Numerous varieties of cloth manufactured in Holland were

being freighted to Danzig by Amsterdam shippers in the 1480s.<sup>8</sup>

The controversies with Denmark, which threatened English access to the Baltic anyway, ensured that the new focus of northern England's export trade would continue to be the Lowlands. In 1486 several hundred of the 1,162 broadcloths exported from Hull by English merchants were sent to the Cold fair at Bergen op Zoom, where toll collectors made specific reference to the English "Hulfaerder" and the value of their imports.<sup>9</sup> And, although complete records have not survived, it is logical that the same merchants also shipped substantial quantities to the Antwerp fairs.

The English presence in the Baltic was indeed nominal up to 1491. However, the notion that English merchants were barred by protectionist statutes or unfairly hindered by supposedly disadvantageous terms of the Utrecht treaty is unconvincing. Quite simply, the export trade of another of England's major regional economies, that of the northern drapery towns, had been siphoned off by the Brabant fairs - a process that had been encouraged by the war between England and the Hanse. After 1475 the Baltic trade was left to the Esterlings themselves and the merchants of Lynn, who did in fact maintain their commercial links with Danzig.

The drastic reduction in annual cloth exports from Hull at the end of the decade illustrates the relative importance of the Hansards there and of the ties with the Brabant fairs. The feud with the Esterlings temporarily reduced the Hanseatic portion of Hull's cloth trade to insignificance. But equally important was Henry VII's

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<sup>8</sup> N.W. Posthumus, De Oosterse Handel te Amsterdam. (Leiden, 1953), 255-336.

<sup>9</sup> W.S. Unger, Iersekerood, 349-51.



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prohibition on exports to the Hapsburg Lowlands, which severely restricted denizen exports to Brabant. No doubt the frustration caused by this obstacle also contributed in some measure to the wave of anti-Hanse sentiment in the north. Yorkshire merchants had not been active at the alternative market at Danzig for more than a decade, but now, in addition to specific and legitimate complaints against Esterling mercenaries, there was a coincidental revival of the age-old complaints of restrictions in Hanseatic towns. As in the past, English merchants sought to assign blame for all manner of economic hardship to the foreign merchant community. And once again, the highly visible Baltic skippers, with their great ships riding at anchor off Hull and Scarborough, were easy targets.

### The Hansards in England

#### a. The North

The regional character and focus of the overseas commerce of northern England is illustrated in the combined and interrelated trade of Hull and Newcastle. And, although customs evidence is fragmentary for the late fifteenth century, some key facets are discernible, especially so far as the Hanse is concerned.<sup>10</sup>

Aggregate broadcloth exports from Hull averaged 2,547 annually from 1476 through 1484, peaking at 3,709 units in 1480-81. The Hanseatic share rebounded and stabilized during the early 1480s at a consistent 20% to 25% of the yearly totals, yet by the middle of the decade Hull's woollen export trade was in decline. There is a gap in customs records for 1484-85, but complete figures

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<sup>10</sup> Appendix A.1.1 and A.1.3; PRO. E122 63/1,2,8, 107/61, 108/1,2,3.

for the next year indicate the beginning of a severe economic slump from which the port would not fully recover until the turn of the century. The trade was especially devastated during the late 1480s. The first real glimpse of Newcastle's trade, provided by quantitative customs evidence, comes at the height of Hull's quarrel with the Esterlings at the end of the decade. Consignments of raw wool, lead, hides and coal were shipped to foreign markets, including Zealand, but broadcloth exports from Newcastle were not significant. Fewer than 200 units were taxed for shipment from the end of October 1487 to Michaelmas 1491. During the same period, however, alien merchandise subject to the petty custom tariff was valued at £1,166, and more than half of this was Hanseatic. This trade heavily favoured Hanseatic imports. In the summer of 1481 merchandise exchanged by Hanseatic merchants at Newcastle was valued at only £150, and the ratio of their import to export values was 2.5 to one. In 1488-89 the value of Hanseatic goods jumped to £473, but the ratio of imports to exports remained unchanged.

At Hull, meanwhile, the Exchequer year 1487-88 saw the lowest aggregate petty custom total since the close of the Anglo-Hanseatic War, and the next year the alien trade in miscellaneous goods was still worth less than £1,000. Initially, then, when the trade at Hull was threatened, the Esterlings apparently turned to Newcastle as an alternative access point to the northern English market. However, alien trade figures at Newcastle are relatively low for the next two years, and totals for Hull, which indicate a resurgence there in 1489-90, misrepresent the volume of voluntary Hanseatic trade. At least one of the five Danzig skippers recorded in the Hull customs particulars had been forcibly diverted to the Humber by disaffected English captains. In addition to royal customs and subsidies, various other sums were



extorted from the Hanseatic cargo owners.<sup>11</sup> The ship's intended destination had been Lynn, and there is in fact a marked decrease in the alien trade totals at Lynn for this year. Those for Hull and Newcastle for 1490-91 offer, perhaps, a truer reflection of the situation in the north as the Hanse deliberately reduced trade to England. They show that the alien trade at both ports had been brought to a virtual standstill.

During the periods when the Hanseatic trade in northern England was not totally obstructed, it continued to be based on bulk imports brought directly from Danzig, or across from Hamburg or ports in Zealand, and on exports of lead eventually destined for the Baltic region or Brabant. As at Newcastle, the principal agents in this traffic were the merchants of Danzig and their factors. They off-loaded more than £1,400 worth of goods at Hull and Scarborough during the summer of 1483, but refreighted minimal cargoes consisting of a few cloths, coverlets, and alabaster altarpieces. Yet, Hanseatic merchants, including those from Danzig, exported more than 100 woollen cloths from Hull, presumably to Zealand, in ships from Veere. The remainder of the Hanseatic cloth exports for 1482-83 must have been shipped prior to April 9th, when surviving particulars of accounts commence. They most assuredly were not sent directly to Danzig during the preceding winter months, and therefore the most plausible destination would be Zealand or perhaps Hamburg. At decade's end, in 1489-90, at least half of the £1,495 worth of alien merchandise subject to the petty custom at Hull was carried by Danzig skippers, who

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<sup>11</sup> HR. (3) II no. 509#83, 510#42; PRO. E122 63/8 (shipper Nicholas Klinckabel, September 1490). In Hull the Hansards also dealt with merchants from York. York Civic Records, ed. A. Raine, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, XCVIII (1938), 163.

in turn refreighted virtually all of the Hanseatic cloth exports, as well as £178 worth of lead.<sup>12</sup>

#### b. The Ports of the Wash

Except for a brief resurgence in 1478, the cloth export trade out of Boston never recovered to its pre-war level, and by the mid-1480s was only marginally significant. However, from Michaelmas 1476 to Michaelmas 1485 £5,791 worth of alien merchandise was exchanged at Boston, and two thirds of it was Hanseatic. During the ensuing twenty-four month period no merchandise at all was customed to Hansards at Boston, and the value of the alien trade plummeted correspondingly to only £148. There was a partial recovery during the next two years, when the Hansards returned, and a great surge in 1489-90, as 95% of £1,243 worth of petty custom merchandise belonged to Hansards. Their importance to Boston's overseas trade is illustrated equally well in figures for the following year, when again their absence caused the value of 3d. custom goods to drop to a mere £41. It is clear, therefore, that the Hansards were the principal alien traders at Boston, but that they came there on an intermittent basis, and were not drawn particularly by the cloth export trade.

All of the £210 worth of Hanseatic miscellanea recorded in the Exchequer year 1483-84 was customed to three Hanseatic merchants, and consisted entirely of fish and oil imports. The same three Hansards also accounted for all of the 152 Hanseatic broadcloth exports. Significantly, though, the cargoes - both imported and exported - were freighted with local Boston shippers, as was the

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<sup>12</sup> PRO. E122 63/1,2,8. The alabaster altarpieces are not inconsistent with cargoes destined for the Baltic. Fifteenth century examples, manufactured for export in Nottinghamshire, are currently displayed at the National Museum in Copenhagen.



£450 worth of fish, osmund and oil imported in November 1484, which represented the total value of Hanseatic merchandise paying the petty custom in the Exchequer year 1484-85. The only other surviving particulars of accounts for this period, however, show that two years later Danzig ships freighted all of the Hansards' 67 broadcloth exports and discharged £263 worth of wood, tar, osmund and bowstaves. This represented the aggregate value of Hanseatic 3d. merchandise for 1487-88, when the ratio of Hanseatic import to export values, inclusive of cloth exports, would have been almost three to one.<sup>13</sup>

Initially, then, the Hanseatic trade at Boston, though intermittent, was integrated with English commercial interests to the extent that the Bergenfahrer employed English carriers to haul fish cargoes. By the late 1480s, however, Boston merchants and shippers evidently had forfeited their role in the Hanseatic trade, which apparently reverted to the Danzigers, who brought bulk freight as well as fish. The trade of the Danzigers was deflected to Boston in part because of the difficulties they were encountering in northern England at the time. But since the beginning of the decade they had also asserted themselves in the Icelandic fish trade.<sup>14</sup> A substantial share of their shipping already served the English and Atlantic seaboard trade, and the port of Boston already was an established distribution centre for stockfish. Perhaps too, the physical presence of the Hansards generally, and Lübeckers in particular, at Boston was sustained more consistently than trade figures suggest. Only three Hanseatic merchants owned cargo customed there in 1484, and a certificate for the next

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<sup>13</sup> Appendices A.1.1 and A.1.3; PRO. E122 10/22,24,25,26, 11/2,3,4,6. Another Danzig ship sailed directly to Boston in the spring of 1490 and left again with lead, cloth and ballast. HUB. XI no. 539.

<sup>14</sup> "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 742.

year lists only three also. In 1487, though, Lübeck merchants were disposing of the property of one Hans Brinck, a Bergenfahrer recently deceased at Boston. Brinck's belongings in the English port included a pack of leather, eleven kersey cloths, blankets, and stocks of fish, yet no Hanseatic trade was recorded at Boston for this year, and Brinck's name does not appear on any previous English customs document.<sup>15</sup>

Elsewhere, at Lynn, cloth export totals for the late 1470s were somewhat lower than those prior to 1468, and there was a severe decline during the mid-1480s, particularly in the denizen sector. By then, annual aggregate cloth exports of around 200 units were usual. There was a spectacular increase to almost 1,000 cloths in 1488-89, with Hansards shipping 80%, but thereafter the trade declined again. From Michaelmas 1487 to Michaelmas 1489 there were also huge increases in the value of petty custom merchandise at Lynn, as Danzig shippers redirected much of their trade at Hull southward. The £3,038 worth of miscellaneous goods customed to the Hansards during this period represented 89% of the total for aliens. Prior to this, the annual total seldom exceeded £1,000, although the Hanseatic share was always significant.<sup>16</sup>

Beginning in 1480-81 there is a wealth of customs particulars for Lynn, and they offer a good indication of the commodity structure, shipping patterns, and the main participants in the trade there.<sup>17</sup> In November 1480 Lynn skippers, in all probability returning from Danzig,

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<sup>15</sup> Die Bergenfahrer und ihre Chronistik. ed. F. Bruns, (Berlin, 1900), 183-84.

<sup>16</sup> It is important to note that the extraordinarily high Hanseatic totals of 777 broadcloth exports and £2,006 worth of 3d. goods in the enrolment for 1488-89 (PRO. E356/23 48v.) are not verified by the corresponding controlment (PRO. E122 98/9), which runs from April to Michaelmas 1489, and shows approximately £465 in petty custom merchandise and fewer than 30 cloths customed to Hansards.

<sup>17</sup> Appendices A.1.1 and A.1.3; PRO. E122 97/17,18, 98/1,2,5,7,8,9,10,11.



off-loaded bulk freight for both Danzigers and local English merchants. The following March, the 'Godyer' of Hamburg weighed anchor at Lynn with a grain cargo valued at £38, returned in July with osmund, wax, pitch, tar and boards, and left Lynn again with a mixed cargo of coverlets, rabbit skins, grain, cheese, and eighteen broadcloths for Hanseatic clients, in addition to cargo for four English merchants. Another £50 worth of bulk freight belonging to Hansards was discharged that summer from a Danzig vessel, which subsequently departed laden with only ten cloths and a few coverlets. A second Hamburg ship carried the remaining 155 Hanseatic broadcloth exports from Lynn in July. Virtually all of the Hanseatic trade was transacted through the agency of the ships' captains and a half dozen merchants from Hamburg and Danzig. Wax imports also were significant, and on the basis of values entered by customs officials and estimated values for cloth, the ratio of total Hanseatic import to export values was two to one. The pattern was much the same for 1483-84. The carriers were from Lynn, Danzig or Hamburg, and both Hansards and Englishmen shared in the cargoes. Consignments of Newcastle lead augmented the cloth exports.

By 1486-87, though, only two Hanseatic ships - one each from Hamburg and Danzig - called at Lynn, and except for a few thousand rabbit pelts valued at £18, all of the £256 worth of Hanseatic petty custom merchandise was imported. Again, while the Hanseatic ships carried most of this freight and additional cargo for indigenous merchants, some consignments also were carried in English ships. Hansards, for example, shipped 40 cloths with John Brekersley of Lynn in May 1487 and also owned part of his return cargo of wood and fish oil. A Calais vessel also brought wainscots, trays and tar worth £14 for Hamburg merchant/shipper Lutkyn Smyth. The Danzig ship called in September and did not depart Lynn until October 4th (sic. in the Exchequer year 1487-88). The

outbound cargo consisted of three cloths and £34 worth of coverlets and pewter.

The following summer three Danzig captains returned, but except for some ashes, oil, flax and counters customed to Robert Bees, the bulk cargo they off-loaded belonged exclusively to Hansards. While the English role was apparently lessened, rather more Hanseatic merchants, approximately ten in all, now shared petty custom imports valued at £838 and the Hanseatic broadcloth exports, which reached 280 units for the year. They also shipped almost £200 worth of coverlets, lead, pewter and hides. There was little change during the next two years. All Hanseatic petty custom imports, along with small consignments of bulk freight belonging to local merchants, were discharged from Danzig ships. Throughout the 1480s Lynn's Hanseatic trade was carried on by merchants or their factors, whose civic affiliation was either Hamburg or Danzig.

English merchants were fully reintegrated into the established network by the end of the decade. Many more indigenous traders had inbound cargo in the ship of Danziger Hans Laurence, who arrived at Lynn in October 1490 and apparently wintered there. The cargo he departed with the following spring also was shared by English as well as Hanseatic merchants, though it was plundered on the return voyage to Danzig by pirates from Honfleur.<sup>18</sup> A Hamburg ship, the only one listed in customs particulars since 1487, also discharged £32 worth of Bay salt, fish and wood for Hansards in 1491, and another Danzig ship returned in September of that year with a large consignment of bulk freight and £5 worth of flax for John Brekersley. In total, Hanseatic petty

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<sup>18</sup> HUB. XI no. 433.



custom imports for the year were valued at £436 and exports £147.

Although the Hansards maintained a presence in both ports, it is evident that they sustained much stronger commercial links with Lynn than with Boston. Especially important in this respect were the ties with Hamburg and Danzig. Actually, Lynn's importance in the bulk carriage trade from Danzig to the east coast ports was surpassed only by that of Hull, and when the Esterlings were unwelcome in the north, Lynn also served as an alternative conduit for their trade. In contrast to Boston also, Lynn began to develop a more diversified export base during the 1470s and 1480s, which compensated, to a degree, for a declining cloth trade. Pewter, hides, and cargoes of lead that had come coastwise from the north frequently augmented the meagre cloth shipments from Lynn. Boston's export trade, on the other hand, continued to be uni-dimensional. When the traffic in cloth there was diminished, only the traditional wool fleets to the Lowlands remained.

Elsewhere in East Anglia there is evidence of some intermittent Hanseatic trade during the late fifteenth century. In 1479-80 Hansards exported eighty broadcloths from Yarmouth, and a petty custom rebate of £4 13s. 1d. indicates their other merchandise was worth about £372. But the export trade, at least, was sporadic, and in most years during the 1480s the Hansards shipped no cloth from Yarmouth. Likewise, the six pieces of double worsted cloth shipped from Blakeney in 1483 were the only recorded Hanseatic exports from that port for the entire decade. Nevertheless, the carrier was Hanseatic, again

pointing to the intermittent presence of such shippers along the Norfolk coast.<sup>19</sup>

In accordance with the Utrecht treaty the Hansards were given properties at both Boston and Lynn in the spring of 1475. The working environment in which individuals or groups of Hanseatic merchants subsequently conducted business likely did not vary greatly in the two towns, and the essential characteristics of the Hanseatic houses offer some insight into the day to day life of Hansards in the Wash ports. Prior to 1475 Hanseatic merchants likely rented various gardens, cellars, and waterfront storage facilities. A 1476 memorandum containing a description of the Boston house indicates that the Hansards had been given a very rudimentary structure, comprising ten rooms with seven chimneys, that was in urgent need of repair. Rather more is known of the property at Lynn, just a few miles away, since some of the original buildings have survived. In 1476 they too were described as very old and consisting of seven "huysse myt boden beneden", and ten rooms with eight chimneys. A kitchen, hall, and courtyard are also listed as being among the other distinguishing attributes. Much of this has endured centuries of flooding and neglect, albeit some of the original buildings also have been altered considerably since their original construction. They occupy a long rectangular site adjoining the south quay on the right bank of the river Ouse. Built around a quadrangle with about twenty-two meters of frontage on the river, the structure extends a length of sixty-one meters to its eastern end where the dwelling units were located. The three-story north wing is constructed of brick, and while much of it was rebuilt in the late sixteenth century, some sections are much older. The

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<sup>19</sup> PRO. E122 152/12; HUB. X no. 438#27; Studies. 360; E.M. Carus-Wilson and D. Coleman, op. cit., 106-10.



long south side of the quadrangle consists of two-story warehouses constructed of brick and timber. Constant dampness and frequent flooding in times past have ensured that little remains of the original timber work. The west quarter, adjacent to the quay, is also entirely of brick. It contains a small hall with a collar-beam roof, and most likely served as a dining area.<sup>20</sup>

The Hanseatic facility was but one of several commercial houses in the port of Lynn. Together with neighbouring mercantile establishments such as Hampton Court and Clifton House, it is representative of the general character and physical continuity of the waterfront district at the close of the Middle Ages. Here the Hanseatic merchants and factors lived and worked. Within the confines of their houses they took their meals, socialized, slept, stored merchandise and transacted business. At the wharves along the river ships off-loaded lead from northern England, forest products from the Baltic, North Sea stockfish and herring, and diverse products from western Europe. They set sail again laden with English cloth, coverlets, Newcastle lead, and pewter, as well as wool for the Calais staple. Although the Hanseatic trade to England was inevitably linked to inland market towns, the Esterlings relied heavily on east coast harbours such as the ports of the Wash, where their business activities came to be centered around newly acquired facilities, especially the one at Lynn. It was counting house, dwelling unit, warehouse and distribution centre, and a focal point for the Hanseatic trade to eastern England.

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<sup>20</sup> Urkundliche Geschichte des hansischen Stahlhofes zu London. ed. J.M. Lappenberg, 209-12, CPR. 1466-1477. 519, 540; HUB. X no. 407, 477#56-58; D. Purcell, "Der hansische Steelyard in King's Lynn, Norfolk", Hanse in Europa : Brücke zwischen den Märkten 12.-17. Jahrhundert. (Köln, 1973), 108-12; W.A. Pantin, "The Merchants' Houses and Warehouses of King's Lynn", Medieval Archaeology, VI-VII (1962), 173-81.

### c. Ipswich/Colchester and the London Steelyard

The mention of "resedencie" at Boston, Lynn, Ipswich, and "in alle Engelandt" in the Steelyard memorandum of 1476 is a broad reference to communities of Hanseatic merchants outside London, and does not imply the existence of Hanseatic comptoirs throughout England. Unlike the Wash ports, there is no clear indication that the Hansards maintained a comptoir at either Ipswich or Colchester. Evidently they rented dwellings and storage facilities in these towns as the need arose. Litigation heard at Chancery in the mid-1460s shows that a Hansard hired storage space for woad in Colchester from local cloth merchant John Stede. In 1491 Hermann van Ae, a Cologne merchant with Steelyard affiliations, boarded in Colchester for a period of eleven or twelve weeks at a house belonging to "hardwareman" John Ambrose. It is most doubtful he would have needed to do so had the Hansards possessed a facility at Colchester or Ipswich like those at Lynn and Boston.<sup>21</sup>

Aggregate cloth exports from Ipswich/Colchester remained consistently low throughout the 1476-1491 period, and never reached the pre-war average in any given year. The apparent decline is reflected almost entirely in the severely reduced export trade of the Hansards, whose yearly broadcloth shipments seldom reached two hundred units in the early 1480s and were still well under a thousand by the end of the decade. However, the Hanseatic traffic in English woollens at Ipswich/Colchester continued to be an extension of the London trade, and the true volume is difficult to determine, since most overseas shipments by the Steelyard Hansards were at least customed in the capital. The value of petty custom merchandise at the Essex and

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<sup>21</sup> HUB. X no. 477#18, XI no. 545, 548; PRO. C1/31/494-98.



Suffolk ports also saw a decline to half the pre-war annual totals or less. Although the Hansards' share was always significant - in 1485-86 they were responsible for all of the 3d. goods recorded by customs officials - there were drastic fluctuations from year to year, and an overall decline in the value of the trade. There are, however, too few particulars of accounts to permit an estimate of the Hanseatic trade balance over a prolonged period. In 1481-82, with cloth exports static at around two hundred units, the Hanseatic trade would have been in balance. But only a year earlier the Hansards had over £1,100 worth of 3d. merchandise customed, and in all probability most of it consisted of imported goods.<sup>22</sup>

Regardless of the decline in trade, there was a sustained Hanseatic presence at Ipswich/Colchester throughout the late 1470s. Included among those allowed customs rebates there were Joris Tack (Duisburg), Heinrich van der Heth (Hamburg), and Hans Stutt (Danzig) - all established Steelyard merchants. The names of fourteen Hansards appear on a certificate appended to the 1481-82 particulars of accounts, and about a dozen individuals actually had merchandise customed.<sup>23</sup> They relied heavily on the cross-Channel routes. Cologners exported cloth and English cheese, and imported woad, cork, and mixed cargo, often in English ships. A Veere shipper also off-loaded wainscots, iron, pitch, wax, salmon and "roysonz" for the Hansards. There was one major cargo of bulk commodities, including bowstaves, iron, boards, vast quantities of fish, and "hedcloth" - a typical import from Hamburg. This cargo was freighted exclusively for Hansards. Hanseatic cloth exports hardly compared to past averages, but still half of the year's total was

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<sup>22</sup> Appendices A.1.1 and A.1.3; PRO. E122 52/58.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.; HUB. X no. 438.

shipped in August and September of 1482, the usual departure period for sailings to the Brabant fairs.

The only other extant customs records of use for this period are the incomplete and much damaged particulars and controlment of customs and subsidies for 1487-88. They are of some interest, however, as direct shipments to Zealand and Brabant were forbidden at this time. Of the 348 cloths exported from Ipswich/Colchester that year 187 left aboard two Hanseatic vessels in October 1487. These ships also carried £48 worth of lead, and no cargo was freighted for indigenous or alien merchants. The ship carrying the bulk of the cloth was captained by Joachim Hommond, whose home port was Hamburg. His arrival in England preceded the start of the Exchequer year, but the profits of his expedition "versus Anglium" are recorded in the Hamburg chamberlains' accounts. Whether or not his cloth cargo was transshipped from the Elbe to either Brabant or the Baltic is impossible to ascertain. However, Hommond's voyage illustrates another increasingly important link in the Anglo-Hanseatic trade, which was being strengthened as cloth shipments were temporarily diverted away from the Lowland ports.<sup>24</sup>

Although the Hansards continued to do business in the ports of Ipswich and Colchester during the final quarter of the century, the focal point of the Hanseatic trade in southern England unquestionably was London. Fifty-three different Hansards had goods customed in the English capital in 1477-78. At least twenty of them were from Cologne. Others, whose civic affiliations can be determined readily, came from Danzig, Hamburg, Lübeck, Soest, Nijmegen, Duisburg, Münster, Deventer and Dinant. And, although the names of some merchants inevitably

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<sup>24</sup> PRO. E122 52/58, 53/3,4; Kassereirechnungen der Stadt Hamburg, III 528.



disappear from subsequent records, new ones take their places, and the overall composition of the Steelyard community and the towns represented within it did not drastically change. In any event, the significance of civic affiliations should not be exaggerated with regard to the probable destinations and eventual distribution of export cargoes. Again in 1480-81 fifty-two Hanseatic merchants shipped goods either to or from London, and regardless of who actually owned the majority of the woollen exports, much of the cloth export trade was concentrated in Brabant. While the Cologners formed by far the largest sub-group at the Steelyard and were particularly dependent on the Bergen op Zoom and Antwerp fairs, they by no means completely dominated the Hanseatic traffic out of London. About one third of the combined Cologne/Hanseatic cloth exports from London during the five Exchequer years ending Michaelmas 1479 were customed to Cologne merchants.<sup>25</sup> Of the 14,079 broadcloths exported by the Hansards during 1480-81, several Cologners shipped between 250 and 400, and others still fewer. The leading Cologne exporter was Gerhard Lesborn, with 554 broadcloths. Hans Stutt, one of a half dozen Danzigers trading out of London that year, exported more than one thousand cloths. Fellow Danziger Albrecht Valand and Lübeck merchant Tylman Barck combined for another thousand, and William Schaphusen of Soest/Dortmund, who shipped 836 broadcloths, also was among the top Hanseatic exporters. Aside from cloth, in which almost every Hansard had an interest, there was some specialization with other commodities, most notably by Johann Salmer and Franck Savage of Dinant, who were the most prominent Hanseatic pewter exporters based in London.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Appendix A.1.2.

<sup>26</sup> PRO. E122 194/22-25.

For their cross-Channel trade the men of the Steeleyard hired Hanseatic, English and Lowland carriers, and also had at least one vessel of their own operating out of London year round during the early 1480s. Shipping was non-seasonal, but there were peak periods coincidental with the annual Brabant fairs. Aside from the 'Maria de Steeleyard', commanded by Lubert van Boke, eight other Hanseatic ships called at London in 1480-81.<sup>27</sup> Hamburg was home port for half of them, and the other four were from Danzig. They brought large bulk cargoes of Baltic origin, and left London with broadcloths, various other woollens, cheese, pewter and hides. Virtually no cargo was carried in these ships for non-Hansards. The cloth may have been taken across the Channel, but unlike the mixed ownership of most cargoes bound for Zealand, the large woollen consignments carried in Hamburg and Danzig vessels in September 1481 belonged almost entirely to resident Esterling merchants, and may well have been carried to the Elbe or perhaps Danzig. Lubert van Boke and the non-Hanseatic skippers carried similar exports out of England, but their return cargoes were somewhat more diverse than those brought by the Esterling ships. Dyestuffs, linens and metalwares were particularly important, and the clientele was not exclusively Hanseatic.

Fragmentary customs records for the early 1480s offer no hint of appreciable change in the Hanseatic trade in London. Another ship, the 'Julyan de Stileyard', joined van Boke and the others plying the Channel, and six vessels from Danzig and Hamburg were in the Thames in the summer of 1483. At least five more were there in 1487.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., Hamburg shippers Godfried Wreth, Caspar Boke, Hans Hagen and Heinrich Castor, and Danzigers Clays Bylle, Clays Bertold, Hans Ruting and Jacob Spisholt. For Lubert van Boke see Appendix A.2.2.

<sup>28</sup> PRO. E122 73/41, 78/3, 194/26; HR. (3) II no. 228-31.



The essential shipping patterns that became established during the 1476-1491 period are clearly discernible in London customs records for the Exchequer year 1490-91, notwithstanding a deliberate reduction in the Hanseatic trade in England that year. On 30th September 1490 van Boke and three other Hamburg vessels cleared London with more than 4,000 broadcloths customed to Steelyard merchants. Shortly thereafter, two Danzig ships discharged bulk cargo at London, and they too left with woollen consignments in early November. At the end of October, meanwhile, two more Hanseatic skippers, likely coming from Hamburg, brought in fish and bulk cargo, and another two Danzigers off-loaded salt. The latter pair remained in London until well into the new year, when they departed with cloth, but one of the others, Cort Defort, was in port for only a fortnight, leaving with a cloth cargo in mid-November. Three of the four shippers who had departed London in September, including van Boke, returned with mixed cargo in mid-December, and all three of them left again in early April, laden with cloth. So too did one of the Danzig salt ships that had been in port since the previous autumn, and still another that had arrived with a salt cargo in March. Defort and two more ships, perhaps from Hamburg, were back in the Thames in August 1491, discharging bulk freight, wax and fish.<sup>29</sup>

It is clear, then, that in addition to the 'Maria' of the Steelyard, at least two Hamburg ships were employed year round on the London/Zealand/Brabant route. Indeed, one of those skippers who left London with cloth in early April was pirated on his return voyage from Zealand later in the summer. From among the vessels bringing salt from the Bay or fish and bulk freight from Hamburg a fourth or even fifth ship was added to the

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<sup>29</sup> PRO. E122 78/9; Appendix A.2.4.

cross-Channel run during peak seasons in April and September. In addition, the Steelyard merchants, and especially the Cologners, made regular use of English carriers serving London and the Lowland ports.<sup>30</sup>

The London trade of the Danzig shippers was fully integrated with a wider range of comprehensive interests along the Atlantic seaboard. The Danzig captains who arrived in London in the autumn of 1490 had sailed directly from the Baltic following the Dominikmarkt in August. Within a few weeks of their arrival in the capital they discharged their bulk cargoes and refreighted English woollens, likely for transport to Zealand. From there they may well have joined the Bay fleet before eventually heading home. Both of them, as well as a third Danzig captain who called at London during the Exchequer year 1490-91, were at Brouage a year later. Likewise, the Danzig carriers bringing salt to England in mid-winter most probably came from the Bay. They reladed woollen cargoes, and their subsequent departures coincided with the Lowland fairs. Shipper Dominic Aalant left Danzig fully laden in 1490, but arrived in the English capital in October with a cargo of salt. He was pirated off Walchern (Zealand) by mariners serving Philip of Kleves on 17th April 1491, shortly after his departure from England with almost 700 broadcloths belonging to Steelyard Hansards.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> PRO. E122 78/9; HUB. XI no. 505-06.

<sup>31</sup> PRO. E122 87/9; WAP6. 300.19/7 43v. shipper Laurence Fredeland, HUB. XI no. 640. For Aalant see "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 782. Danzigers also had interests in two ships taken en route from Zealand to England by the French in June 1487. Acta Statuum Prussiae Regalis. ed. K. Gorski and M. Biskup, (Torun, 1955), I no. 250; BL. Additional 155505 f.21. Another Danzig skipper, Peter Harder, also had come to London in 1488, his cargo consisting partly of a consignment of flax for one Gregor Matern, also of Danzig. A dispute between the two men over water damage to the cargo carried on until both of them were back in Danzig two years later. When Matern then did not obtain the justice he sought from the civic authorities he embarked on a career of kidnapping, murder, mutilation and arson, and thus became one  
(Footnote Continued)



Finally, the shippers who arrived in August represent another principal link in the Hanse's London trade. They could have come from Zealand, but the composition of their cargoes, owned almost exclusively by Hamburg and Danzig merchants, suggests they weighed anchor at Hamburg. They off-loaded large fish cargoes, linens of north German manufacture, and Baltic products such as wax, osmund and wood. Hamburg shippers made regular trips to England in the 1480s and early 1490s, while at the same time securing a major role in the Icelandic fisheries. Up until the late 1480s they could carry Icelandic fish directly to England. Early in 1489, however, in order to protect beer and bread provisioners in Hamburg, the town required all her Islandfahrer to revictual in Hamburg prior to any onward journey. Thus, Hamburg's position as a transit point linking the fish trade with England was reinforced, and thereafter a fundamental shipping pattern developed, which endured well into the next century. Skippers returning from Iceland would off-load some of their fish cargoes and take on other freight, including linens from the northern German towns and Baltic goods that had reached the Elbe via Lübeck, and then sail to England. Or they could transfer fish cargoes to ships waiting to depart thither. Vessels came back from England laden with cloth, both for domestic consumption in and around Hamburg, and for transshipment eastward. This aspect of the trade had been enhanced already, when Hansards were forced to divert English cloth exports over Hamburg during Henry VII's restrictions on direct sailings to Zealand and Brabant in 1487-88. Moreover, the England/Hamburg link could easily accommodate Hanseatic shippers who found it worthwhile to vary their itinerary in Atlantic waters, and not necessarily come as far as London. Cort Defort,

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(Footnote Continued)

of the most notorious criminals in Prussia. "Christoph Beyers des ältern Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 445-50.

for instance, docked at Ipswich in January 1492 with another cargo consisting of fish, typical Baltic commodities, and a selection of linens, including varieties manufactured in Osnabrück and Hamburg.<sup>32</sup>

The volume of the Hanse's London trade mirrored the course of Anglo-Hanseatic political relations. Aggregate Hanseatic cloth exports from London hovered around 10,000 units for 1490-91, a figure comparable with totals for the 1470s, but not with the significantly higher yearly average for the 1480s.<sup>33</sup> The low total may be attributed to the intentional reduction in the trade, as Hanseatic relations with England reached a low ebb on the eve of the Antwerp diet. Understandably, the only other notable decline in the cloth trade out of the Steelyard came when Hansards were forced to abide by English restrictions on cloth exports. In a twenty-one month span beginning in December 1486 Hansards shipped only 21,748 broadcloths from the capital. But the denizen exporters apparently were hit even harder by the restrictions. During the same period they managed to export only about 15,000, which was far fewer than usual.<sup>34</sup>

About four dozen Hansards still traded out of the London Steelyard in 1490-91, and the fellowship included

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<sup>32</sup> Kammereirechnungen der Stadt Hamburg. III 528, 596, IV 154; HR. (3) II no. 228-30; HUB. XI no. 275; PRO. E122 53/8,9, 78/9; K. Friedland, "Hamburger Englandfahrer 1512-1557", Zeitschrift des Vereins für Hamburgische Geschichte, XLVI (1960), 8-14.

<sup>33</sup> Although the controlment of the cloth and petty custom for 1490-91 (PRO. E122 78/9) apparently extends to the end of the Exchequer year, the last recorded Hanseatic cloth shipments were in June 1491 and the last imports in August. The absence of shipments, especially cloth consignments, from mid-August through late September is quite extraordinary if, in fact, the account is accurate and complete, since the intentional reduction in Hanseatic trade to England presumably would have ended when the Antwerp conference concluded at the end of June.

<sup>34</sup> Studies. 346; E.M. Carus-Wilson and O. Coleman, op. cit., 106-10.



at least eighteen Cologners and ten Danzigers.<sup>33</sup> The cloth exports were relatively evenly distributed. Leading exporters included Danzigers Hans Stagnet, with more than 900 units, and Hans Mulner, with almost 800, but several of the Cologne and Danzig merchants, as well as Tylman Barck, shipped between 400 and 600 broadcloths. Hamburg merchant Hermann Bergentrik also accounted for more than 700.

Fluctuations in the Hanseatic import trade for the 1476-1491 period are more difficult to detect than those in the woollen export trade.<sup>34</sup> In 1476-77 the recorded value of Hanseatic 3d. merchandise was £7,487. Following a brief decline the next year, it increased steadily and by 1481-82, the last year Hanseatic totals are distinguished from the alien aggregate in the customs enrolments, it had virtually tripled to more than £22,000, and accounted for over half of the total value of the non-denizen trade. Moreover, Hanseatic wax shipments for that year peaked at 3,560 quintals, adding another £7,100 to the value of imports. There is no way of assessing the volume of trade during the rest of the 1480s, as the Hanseatic totals are buried in the enrolled figures for aliens, and there are no particulars of accounts on which to base any calculation. However, a breakdown of the 1490-91 particulars shows the value of Hanseatic 3d. merchandise was a disappointing £11,554, and constituted only about 30% of the alien trade. The figures also suggest that the clamour in northern England about a severe trade imbalance favouring the Hansards did not apply to the situation in London. Regardless of what reasonable value might be assigned to broadcloths, the total worth of the Steelyard's export trade (10,074 cloths and £2,223 worth of miscellaneous goods) would

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<sup>33</sup> PRO. E122 78/9; Appendix A.1.5.

<sup>34</sup> PRO. E122 78/3, 78/9, 194/24-26, E356/22 36r.-38r.

have exceeded by a considerable margin that of imports, which totaled £9,331 in petty custom goods and 760 hundredweights of wax valued at £1,520.<sup>37</sup> This would have been true even if Hanseatic wine imports, subject to the separate subsidy of tunnage, had been significant. Moreover, even a decade earlier, at the height of a flourishing Hanseatic traffic in London, there is no indication in the customs records that the import trade dominated. It is just as probable that the trade then was approximately in balance, or even favoured the export sector.

In 1490-91 essentially the same core group of merchants prominent in the cloth trade also accounted for the lion's share of the Steelyard's import trade. Bergentrik and another merchant from Hamburg, Berthold van Ryne, together had almost £1,500 worth of miscellaneous goods customed. Several of the resident Danzigers had between £200 and £400 worth of imported goods, and they clearly dominated the Hanseatic wax trade as well. Danziger Hermann Plough, for example, imported only about £180 worth of 3d. merchandise, but he owned more than 200 quintals of wax, representing a full quarter of the Hanseatic total, with each quintal valued at forty shillings. Another 116 quintals were customed to Hans Mulner. Merchants from Danzig also were key agents in the Hanse's salt import trade. Plough, Peter Ecksted and Peter Sano of Danzig together owned virtually all of the salt cargoes customed to Hansards. However, in the mid-1480s Cologners too had salt freighted to London, only to lose heavily on their investment when the mayor arbitrarily fixed the selling price far below cost. Also, a Hamburg ship was taking salt and other goods to London in the winter of 1485-86 when it was plundered by pirates from Fowey, and only a year before Englishmen had

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<sup>37</sup> Appendix A.1.2.



contracted a Danzig skipper to haul salt from the Bay to London.<sup>384</sup>

As was the case with the Esterling merchants, the value of other imports belonging to individual Cologners also varied considerably. The leading Cologner was Johann Blitterswik, with less than £400 worth of petty custom goods. Totals for the leading individuals at the Steelyard reflect the same trade balance as the aggregate figures. The major cloth exporters, with 250 units or better, appear to have had considerably more invested in English woollens than in the merchandise they imported into London. The combined trade was brought more closely into balance by less prominent merchants, Esterlings and Cologners alike, who were not particularly significant in either the import or export sector, but whose imported goods quite often were valued higher than the merchandise they shipped out of England. The Cologners still offered fustian, steel, thread, wire, cider, wine, madder and linens, as well as consignments of copperware, "marbelais plate" and "shearmans sherys". The Esterlings dealt primarily in osmund, linen, wood, canvas, pitch, yarn, bowstaves and wax.<sup>385</sup>

#### Anglo-Hanseatic trade to Brabant, and the eastward extension

Like their Hanseatic competitors, English merchants also were attracted to the Brabant fairs during the 1470s and 1480s. Most conspicuous among them were Londoners and merchants from Colchester and Ipswich, but there were several northerners as well, from Hull, Beverley and

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<sup>38</sup> B. Kuske, Quellen. II no. 1206#36; CPR. 1485-1494. 105; HUB. X no. 1130. For the major Steelyard merchants see Appendix A.1.5.

<sup>39</sup> PRO. E122 78/9; B. Kuske, Quellen. II no. 1206#37.

York.<sup>40</sup> Their business ventures in the Lowlands were spurred on in the late 1470s by the treaty of mercantile intercourse between England and Burgundy concluded in the summer of 1478. For the most part they used English and Lowland shipping to carry their wares across the Channel, and seldom freighted cargo in Hanseatic vessels. The shipments they brought to Brabant typically consisted of broadcloths and other English textiles, although cargoes of lead and leather were not unusual. Englishmen laded fish oil, tar, pitch, wood and iron at the Zealand quays, and also purchased ships there.<sup>41</sup>

Aside from the local Brabantine merchant communities, the most important commercial contacts for the English traders at Antwerp and Bergen op Zoom may well have been the Hansards of the London Steelyard and their factors, since it was common for the obligations of Hanseatic cloth buyers to be paid at the fairs. In 1477 payment for cloth purchased from Colchester merchant William Smyth by Cologner Johann van Dorn was to be made to Smyth's English factor, Richard Russel, at the Bergen op Zoom fairs. Likewise, other Steelyard Cologners, Johann Hardenrode and Heinrich Molhem, were obliged to discharge a debt to London grocer John Brouck at Antwerp in 1485. A transaction between another London grocer, Richard Lendorp, and Hansard Thomas Tack in 1491 for cloth valued at £44 was entrusted to Lendorp's English factor at Antwerp. Still other London merchants employed resident Antwerp burgesses as their agents at the fairs.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> SAA. SR. 89 28r., SR. 92 16r., 16v., 48r., 195v., SR. 93 78r., 158r., SR. 94 45r., SR. 96 123v., 128v., 215r., 240v.; R. Doehaerd, Etudes. II no. 238, III no. 2944.

<sup>41</sup> PRO. E122 78/3, 78/9, 194/24-26; W.S. Unger, Iersekerroord. 348-50. For the Anglo-Burgundian treaty: PRO. E30/561, 566, 568, 1097.

<sup>42</sup> R. Doehaerd, Etudes. III no. 2918, 2952; H.J. Smit, Bronnen. (1) II no. 1823, (2) I no. 7.



A second indispensable component in the expanding trade of Antwerp and Bergen op Zoom were the native Brabantine merchants themselves. Not only did the cross-Channel routes employ many a Lowland mariner during the late fifteenth century, the Brabantine merchant community also carried on a brisk trade with England. The volume of their trade in the kingdom is difficult to estimate, although English customs figures suggest it hardly compared with that of the Hansards. Nevertheless, it was common for Channel ships, including Hanseatic ones, to freight cargo to England for the merchant citizens of Bergen op Zoom and Antwerp. The spring of 1480 saw Antwerp merchants shipping hops and iron to distant Newcastle, while others were bringing barley and frieses from England to Bergen op Zoom with London shipper Richard Blackburn.<sup>43</sup>

The cross-Channel traffic was, though, but a single aspect of the expanding mercantile interests of the Brabanders. They transacted business with Hansards, Englishmen, Italians, Spaniards and south Germans at the great fairs, and shipped coastwise also to Amsterdam and the Hanseatic ports of Hamburg and Lübeck.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, a strong link with the English wool staple at Calais was maintained and perhaps even strengthened during the troubled late 1480s. Records of goods certified for transport to and from Antwerp in 1488 suggest a steady traffic between Calais and Brabant when direct sea transport from England was restricted. Finally, unlike the English, Brabantine merchants contributed significantly to the eastern extension of the burgeoning overland trade. They not only met the Nürnberg, Breslau, and Augsburg merchants at Bergen op Zoom and Antwerp, but

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<sup>43</sup> G. Asaert, Documenten. 16, 23, 40, 150-68, 173; R. Doehaerd, Etudes. II no. 156, 160.

<sup>44</sup> R. Doehaerd, Etudes. II no. 39, 395.

also sent cloth, spices and mixed cargo of their own by waggon to Frankfurt and points beyond.<sup>45</sup>

So far as Hanseatic interests were concerned, the Brabant fairs had clearly emerged as an integral part of their vast commercial network. While the Hanseatic reliance on Zealand and Brabant had been heightened by the Anglo-Hanseatic War and subsequently by political instability in Flanders, other inducements also contributed to the further expansion of the Hansards' Brabantine trade. In 1477 Bergen op Zoom conveyed a house to them with the right of permanent and free occupation. They already possessed a house at Antwerp, and early in 1481 a twenty-five year extension of Hanseatic privileges there was confirmed by Maximillian and Duchess Maria of Burgundy.<sup>46</sup>

And so, a gradual shift of Hanseatic commerce away from Flanders continued. Although the comptoir at Bruges was kept, the disputes with the archduke, combined with Bruges' susceptibility to civil revolt, had begun to alienate a good many Hansards resident there. The Bruges Hansards routinely attended the fairs at Bergen op Zoom and Antwerp anyway, and as turmoil engulfed Flanders during much of the 1480s, the flourishing market and comparative security of the Brabantine ports beckoned. Still caught on the treadmill of protectionist restrictions, Bruges could do little to slow the departure of the Hansards. Harbour officials at the outport of Sluis persisted in arresting consignments of English textiles owned by Hanseatic merchants, and the Flemish cloth staple offered few new incentives to Hanseatic buyers.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> R. Doehaerd, Etudes, II 1ff.

<sup>46</sup> HUB. X no. 569-70, 865-69, 886; ARA. CC. Cartons series I, 1-4, no. 189.

<sup>47</sup> HUB. X no. 562. For Bruges Hansards at the Brabant fairs see Ibid., no. 509, 694, 736, 870, 911, 1012.



Together with inbound cloth cargo inventories, the names of several Cologne and Westphalian merchants from the London Steelyard appear in the Zealand/Brabant toll records for the late 1470s. So too does that of Johann Salmer, the Steelyard's pewter specialist, who, not surprisingly, brought in quantities of tin as well. The same essential pattern was intact on the eve of the English restrictions on cloth shipments in the autumn of 1486. Leading Steelyard men, among them Tylman Barck, Hermann Bergentrik, Joris Tack, Salmer, and numerous Cologners, were sending cloth to the Cold fair at Bergen op Zoom.<sup>40</sup> There is scant mention of the Danzigers, but whereas it was not unusual for the Cologners of the Steelyard to attend the fairs in Brabant and even Frankfurt, the Danzigers were commonly represented by factors.

Under normal circumstances the vast majority of English imports were shipped to the fairs either directly or via the Zealand quays. During 1487 and 1488, however, Cologners re-routed English woollens to Brabant not only over Hamburg, but also through Calais and Bruges. At least one such shipment was robbed by soldiers from Bruges in 1487, despite certification for transport through Flanders. The following year another consignment was seized by the captain of the garrison at

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<sup>40</sup> ARA. CC. 49833 3v.,4r.; W.S. Unger, Iersekerkoord. 334-49, 363-68; H.J. Smit, Bronnen. (1) II no. 1999, (2) I no. 9; B. Kuske, Quellen. II no. 1206#23,41. The contention of W. Brulez, "Bruges and Antwerp in the 15th and 16th Centuries : An Antithesis?", Acta Historiae Neerlandicae, VI (1973), 23 that, since English cloth was finished in Brabant, Cologne merchants purchased it from English and Brabantine merchants at Antwerp, is totally unfounded. English customs particulars clearly show that the Cologners themselves, as well as other Hansards, shipped vast quantities of English woollens from London with Zealand, Brabantine and Hanseatic carriers. Furthermore, not only could the Cologners pay less for English cloth in London than in Brabant, as Brulez concedes, they also could ship it more cheaply to the fairs, since they paid lower export duties than English merchants. So far as the final processing of cloth in Antwerp is concerned, under Henry VII the English government severely restricted the export of unfinished cloth at the insistence of the denizen cloth shearers. Even if this had not been the case, it does not follow that Cologne merchants would pay premium retail prices for unfinished English cloth at Antwerp, simply because of a dependence on the Brabantine finishing industry.

Gravelines.<sup>49</sup> A comparable transit network served the trade in the opposite direction. From Brabant and the Zealand outports the Hansards transshipped iron, thread, fustian, and linen to England. Bulk goods from the Baltic also were included, and so too were shipments of Rhinish cider and Gascon wine, although a parliamentary statute of 1490 prohibited the use of non-English carriers for Gascon wine imports. Again too, Calais served as a conduit, especially when Flemish corsairs or royal decrees hindered direct cross-Channel shipping. Wainscots, hops and tar were being directed from Antwerp to Calais in 1488, and a leading Steelyard Cologner, Hermann Rinck, had pepper, thread and dyestuffs distrained there the following year.<sup>50</sup>

The Brabant fair towns and their outports in Zealand were utilized extensively as distribution points for North Sea fish and Baltic imports. Merchants from Lübeck, Hamburg and Danzig brought beer, copper, stockfish and lumber coastwise from the Elbe to Zealand, whence cargoes could be taken to Bergen op Zoom and Antwerp, or redirected to England. In 1481 quantities of copper, wax, tar and tallow belonging, in part, to Lübeckers, were seized as false goods in Antwerp and burnt, to the great disgrace of the Hanseatic community there. Danzig's fleets also brought grain, salt from the Bay and Lisbon, and English woollens. They sailed home from Zealand laden with textiles, salt, wine, and North Sea herring. Cologners too brought herring shipments through Brabant for transport southward to Frankfurt.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> HUB. XI no. 331, 443(I,II); R. Doehaerd, Etudes. II no. 47; B. Kuske, Quellen. II no. 1143, 1206#22.

<sup>50</sup> H.J. Smit, Bronnen. (2) I no. 39; B. Kuske, Quellen. II no. 602, 608, 1143; SAA. Cert. I 2r., 16r.

<sup>51</sup> CPR. 1476-1485. 425; HUB. X no. 680, 827, 911, XI no. 505-06; R. Doehaerd, Etudes. I no. 158; H.A. Poelman, Bronnen. no. 2821; "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 743-44.



Just as the bulk carriage trade of the Baltic Hansards had been deflected to the Zealand outports and thence to the Brabant fairs during the Anglo-Hanseatic War, so also had the conflict fostered a strengthening of the east-west axis of Cologne's trade. Cologners were largely eliminated from Baltic ventures during the hostilities with England, and this was a catalyst not only for the increased cross-Channel traffic in woollens between England and Brabant, but also for the eastward extension of the trade to Frankfurt. During the 1470s Cologne merchants continued to send waggonloads of English cloth eastward following the annual autumn fairs, and they sold great quantities of it at Frankfurt, especially to merchants from Nürnberg.<sup>52</sup> In 1487 Cologners were sending their cloth as far as Venice, and declared £1,000 in lost profits at the Antwerp, Bergen op Zoom and Frankfurt fairs when their shipments from England were hindered. In accordance with the restriction on the export of unshorn cloth imposed at the insistence of English cloth shearers, Cologners alone claimed they were obliged to have 13,650 broadcloths sheared in England between 1485 and 1491. Undoubtedly, most of these shipments were consumed by the Brabant/Cologne/Frankfurt market.<sup>53</sup>

Moreover, even as Cologne laboured to extend trade eastward, growing numbers of non-Hanseatic buyers from eastern regions were attracted to the Brabant fairs. Merchants from Nürnberg, Frankfurt, Augsburg and Leipzig were forging strong direct links with Brabant, expanding

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<sup>52</sup> ARA. CC. 49833 4r. and 4v.; F. Rülke, op. cit., 83; F. Irsigler, Die wirtschaftliche Stellung der Stadt Köln im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert. (Köln, 1979), 303-05.

<sup>53</sup> R. Doehaerd, Etudes. II no. 47; B. Kuske, Quellen. II no. 1055, 1206#3, 9, 22, 23, 27, 32, 35, 41.

both their own specialized trade in precious metals and metalwares and the traffic in woollens.<sup>54</sup>

The ascendancy of the Brabant fairs and the consequent strengthening of the Cologne/Frankfurt trade prompted a range of responses within the Hanseatic community, and set in motion a fundamental shift in the trade structure of northern Europe, for not only did the south Germans reach out to Antwerp, they also were drawn toward the markets of the northeast. Already since mid-century cloth, including English varieties, had been reaching Warsaw via Leipzig and Posa or Breslau. Silk from Nürnberg also was brought as far as Thorn. A very important overland trade route, the Vogtländerstrasse, linked Breslau with south German markets via Görlitz, Dresden, Zwickau and Bayreuth. In addition, merchants from the southern non-Hanseatic towns extended their trade to the easternmost reaches of the Hanseatic community, tapping the Livonian trade in furs and bulk products. Nürnberg and Leipzig too became alternatives to Danzig as outlets for the grain and timber producers in greater Poland.<sup>55</sup>

In 1470 the Hanseatic diet at Lübeck resolved to implement tough protectionist policies, ostensibly aimed at the south Germans trading to Livonia, which restricted the transport of goods from Livonia and Poland westward "dorch Dutsche lande", and required that all Flemish, Brabantine and Holland cloth be sent to non-Hanseatic towns only via Antwerp or Bergen op Zoom, or the staple at Bruges. This frantic attempt to consolidate the Hanseatic grip on the east-west trade and prevent circumvention of established routes between Flanders, Brabant

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<sup>54</sup> SAA. Cert. I 10r., 11v., 27r., 31v., 64r., 67v., 69r., SR. 90 218v., 239r., 289v., 91 181r., 262v., 290v., 92 143v., 93 257v., 96 202r., 99 90r.; R. Doehaerd, Etudes, II no. 36, 242, 246, 925.

<sup>55</sup> A. Siasch, op. cit., 25-29, 90-95.



and the eastern regions was, of course, undermined by the perseverance of the Cologners and eventually some of their Westphalian colleagues, who would not relinquish their integral commercial connections with Frankfurt and Nürnberg.<sup>56</sup> The successful preservation of this link in the early 1470s produced another important corollary, since the eastward extension of Nürnberg's overland trade hinged, in the first instance, on traffic to and from Silesia and the Hanseatic town of Breslau, whose merchants were well acquainted with Lowland cloth manufacturers, and generally were opposed to the Hanseatic policy of maintaining the Bruges staple. During the 1450s and 1460s Breslau seldom sent delegates to the Hansetag, and as the overland trade expanded, the town's role within the Hanse became all the more obscure, until in 1474, Breslau withdrew from the Hanse, citing the confederation's outdated Stapelpolitik as a principal reason. Breslau now developed as a vital non-Hanseatic transit point in the trade further eastward to Cracow, creating a link that challenged the established Danzig/Thorn/Cracow connection by drawing the trade of Poland into the east-west overland network. By the late 1480s Cracow too was no longer a member town of the Hanse.<sup>57</sup>

So, while stringent protectionism was as yet an effective deterrent against the incursion of the south Germans in Livonia, it failed to preserve the Hanseatic monopoly of overland supply routes that interconnected with the seaborne trade of Danzig. Hence, the Danzigers too were obliged to reassess relationships with their southern neighbours. By the mid-1470s Danzig's deliberately lax enforcement of prescribed Hanseatic restrictions on non-Hanseatic merchants signalled at least a

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<sup>56</sup> F. Rülke, op. cit., 114-19; HR. (2) VI no. 356, 483.

<sup>57</sup> F. Rülke, op. cit., 52, 126-31; HR. (2) VII 181#5, 183#5, (3) I no. 144.

limited attempt to accommodate rather than totally inhibit commercial contact. The town even experimented with two new annual fairs open to foreigners in the early 1480s, although at least one of them was discontinued in 1485.<sup>58</sup>

This rather moderate attitude contrasted sharply with policy in Livonia. Even though Novgorod came under Muscovite control in 1471 and would capitulate completely in 1478, Dorpat, Riga, Reval and Narva still formed the established and most viable conduits for Novgorod's trade to the west, and they continued to prohibit the transport of cloth, wax and furs overland via Poland and Lithuania. Even the inevitable expulsion of the Hansards from their Novgorod comptoir, postponed as it was through truce and treaty until 1494, would not in itself necessitate an immediate reorientation of trade links with the emporium. Nor would it force any new flexibility in Livonia regarding trade with the south Germans.<sup>59</sup> Joining the Livonian towns in the movement within the Hanse to maintain the Bruges staple and preserve traditional trade routes was Lübeck. Yet, Lübeckers too were not without commercial interests in the south. From Cologne and the Frankfurt fairs and Nürnberg weapons, jewels, books, precious metals, wine, Italian embroidery, fine Augsburg cloth, and eastern spices all were funnelled through Lübeck for redistribution in the Baltic region. In return, Lübeck supplied southern markets with stockfish and herring.<sup>60</sup>

This commercial sub-structure within the broader trade framework reveals an underlying concern at the

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<sup>58</sup> HR. (2) VII no. 367, 379; "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", op. cit., 744, 754.

<sup>59</sup> HR. (2) VII no. 338#220, (3) II no. 136; HUB. X no. 938, XI no. 102.

<sup>60</sup> LUB. X no. 112, 227, 292, 308, XI no. 318, 367, 397; HR. (2) VII no. 81#7, 368, 388#141, 159; F. Rülke, op. cit., 94-109.



heart of the debate between protectionists and those towns favouring either partial or total deregulation of trade, for within the Hanseatic network the primary role of Lübeck remained that of distribution centre for goods in transit, and therefore the town was especially vulnerable to altered commodity structures and any reorientation of transport links. By contrast, the cornerstone of the trade out of the southern German towns, Cologne, and even Danzig was some sort of industrial or agricultural resource base. The Leipzig market, for example, was a principal outlet for the mines of Saxony. Nürnberg and Frankfurt not only offered exotic luxury wares from Italy and the east, they were, in their own right, key production and supply centres for weaponry, metals, and metalwares. Silk and steel production in and around Cologne also provided that town with a solid industrial base for a potentially dynamic export trade. And, although links to sources were somewhat more tenuous in the eastern Baltic, Danzigers could rely on grain and forest products to sustain their vital seaborne commerce so long as they dominated trade with the Prusso-Polish hinterland.

While the situation of Lübeck with regard to resource industries and agriculture did not compare, it did not necessarily preclude an opportunity for expansion of a shipping industry to serve the long-distance carriage trade along with Hamburg and Danzig. Indeed, the existing intra-Baltic trade connections between Lübeck and Livonia might well have provided the basis for growth in the shipping sector. Yet, by mid-century it was not the Lübeckers, but rather the Hollanders who were forging important new links in the salt and grain traffic that linked the Lowlands with the eastern Baltic region. The Icelandic fisheries also offered excellent prospects for further development of Lübeck's Atlantic and North Sea shipping, especially if the Wendish sector could have been reintegrated into the Hanse's trade with England. Again, though, Lübeck seemed bound by a traditional

reliance on the Bergen comptoir and the Norwegian fisheries supplying the Baltic. And, the town remained alienated from or largely indifferent to the English trade throughout much of the second half of the century.

By the beginning of the 1490s the modification of the economic infra-structure of northern Europe was already placing incalculable strain on the political viability of the Hanse. Though fueled by a series of both economic and political developments, this commercial restructuring and its repercussions also were rooted, at least partly, in the ebb and flow of relations between the Hanse and England, commencing with the crisis of 1468 and Cologne's subsequent refusal to foresake the English trade. Prior to that, Hansards constituted the principal foreign merchant group linking England's overseas trade with the northern continental network. The severing of that link was bound to have far more complex consequences than the long-term loss of England's Baltic trade, to which English historiographical tradition draws tireless attention.

It is true that, except for the merchants of Lynn, English presence at the Prussian staple remained quite limited during the 1470s and 1480s. Moreover, the post-war era saw most of the Hanse's English trade outside of London revert to the Esterlings from Hamburg and Danzig, who had been England's staunchest adversaries during the conflict. And, by the Treaty of Utrecht, Hansards did retain all prior rights and privileges in England until the almost systematic harassment began in the late 1480s. But the war years also had at least two other profound affects on the English seaborne economy. They accelerated the consolidation of the English cloth export trade in London, and linked it all the more firmly with the annual Brabant fairs. Also, the total exclusion of Englishmen from the Baltic prompted a complete shift in the focus of the Yorkshire woollen export industry to Brabant as well. Neither London's importance nor the



concentration of the trade out of northern England diminished following the suspension of hostilities. Throughout the disruption of direct mercantile contact between the Baltic and England, and afterward, the Brabant fairs and the Zealand outports served to integrate England's main commercial interests, as well as the trade of the Esterlings, with vital continental markets.

Already crucial to London's cloth export trade in peacetime, the merchants of Cologne played a central role in keeping the cross-Channel trade to Brabant open during the Anglo-Hanseatic War. Just as important, the heightened significance of the Brabant fairs, coupled with the temporary curtailment of Cologne's northern commercial interests, ultimately increased emphasis on the east-west trading axis, and led to the strengthening and eventual extension of the overland trade eastward. This coincided with mercantile expansion in the south German regions, and foreshadowed the development during the 1470s and 1480s of an alternative commercial network capable of challenging established Hanseatic monopolies.

The response of various Hanseatic interest groups to the new challenge again highlighted regional particularism and the overall political decrepitude of the confederation, so that by the time the Anglo-Hanseatic conference convened at Antwerp in 1491, there no longer could be any common perception of the Hanse's raison d'être. In the first instance, it had been the merchants of Cologne who had strayed furthest from the fold by helping to extend the London/Brabant trade eastward beyond Frankfurt. In this sector Cologners derived no particular benefit from membership in the Hanse. Indeed, "Hanseatic" policy regarding Bruges and commercial contact with foreigners often was a burden. But their Hanseatic status was of paramount importance in England, if they hoped to maintain their advantage in the woollen trade, which was, after all, crucial to their mercantile prosperity. Preferential

English customs and subsidies for merchants of the "Hanse Almain" were all important to the Cologners and their associates.

For the Esterling merchants and shippers from Danzig and Hamburg membership in the Hanse also had become a mixed blessing. They were just as well or perhaps better served by moderate and selective protectionist statutes that could be modified to suit a changing trade framework, as by the blanket restrictions traditionally prescribed by the Hanse. Hamburg and Danzig were, however, still keenly interested in preserving the Hanseatic status of their merchants in England, or at least stable relations with the English, in order to exploit the lucrative English connection in both the cloth and bulk carriage trade.

Quite a different set of circumstances confronted Lübeck, though. Lübeckers, by and large, could no longer take full advantage of their Hanseatic status vis à vis England, since their trade there was not especially significant. Yet, they were loath to abandon much of the all-encompassing Hanseatic protectionism that previously had served their entrenched interests outside of England by safeguarding distributive routes vital to the town's static long-distance trade.

Not directly represented at the Antwerp talks, and least of all concerned with Hanseatic privileges in England, were the distant Livonian towns. Aside from the Muscovite military threat, a key concern in Livonia was the south German challenge to established monopolies of regional supply sources and transport routes. Here then, Hanseatic membership was useful, since rigid protectionism, sanctioned by the Hanse, continued to be an effective deterrent.

Notwithstanding the Iberian connections and occasional forays into the Mediterranean, there were as yet



three possible avenues for expansion of English overseas trade in the late fifteenth century, and in each of them England was confronted by Hanseatic interests. Yet, although the first of these - the Icelandic fisheries - was a sector coveted by Hansards and English alike, England's role would ultimately be determined through Anglo-Danish diplomacy. In any event, while the English did succeed in penetrating this trade, it really was of little benefit to the woollen export industry on which the national economy was so dependent. A second and highly speculative possibility for expansion, therefore, was the cross-Channel trade to Brabant, and the forging of more direct links with south German buyers. But this, in all likelihood, would necessitate dislodging the Cologners and Westphalians from the trade out of London. The intimidation during the late 1480s came precariously close to achieving this. Realistically, though, the English could scarcely expect to make inroads much beyond the Brabant fairs, for Cologne would still be an essential intermediary in both the Rhineland trade and its eastern extension. Besides, the substantial import trade of the Steelyard Cologners and their colleagues furnished England with dyestuffs, metals, and other essentials for which English merchants would be hard pressed to find an alternative source. Finally, there remained the Prussian staple at Danzig - as much a neglected market as an inaccessible one for the better part of a quarter century.

This, then, was at the heart of the Antwerp talks in 1491. The convening of the conference, coming as it did as a direct result of pressures on the Hanseatic community in England, marked the initial success of a new initiative by the government of Henry VII to give English mercantile interests an opportunity to re-establish a presence in the Baltic. But only time would tell if the merchant adventurers themselves would prove equal to the task. And, again as they had some twenty years earlier, pressures in England had anything but an all-pervasive effect within the Hanse membership. Rather, they once

again highlighted the divergent concerns of a number of the key sub-groups within the confederation. Now, though, those concerns were all the more clearly defined by a modified and no longer exclusively Hanseatic commercial network in northern continental Europe.





J.D.F. 1983

King's Lynn : The Hanseatic House, post-1475.  
The south wall with "jettied" upper story.  
15th century.





J.D.F. 1986

**Bergen op Zoom** : The Town Hall, part of which served as the residence for English merchants at the fairs, 1470-1498.  
15th-17th century.



## VII HANSARDS AND THE ANGLO-LOWLAND TRADE WARS : THE INTEREGNUM AND ITS AFTERMATH

Following the conference at Antwerp in 1491, further talks between English and Hanseatic representatives were repeatedly postponed from year to year.<sup>1</sup> The unresolved differences apparently were not sufficient for either side to press for the immediate reconvening of a formal diet. The English evidently contented themselves with the confirmation of their status at the Prussian staple. And, with the overt hostility against the Hanseatic community in abeyance, the Steelyard merchants tolerated, though not without protest, the continued enforcement of statutes restricting the export of unshorn cloth. All in all, relations between the Hansards and the denizen merchant community, at least in southern England, were cordial enough to allow the resumption of normal Anglo-Hanseatic trade.

However, with the English cloth export trade so concentrated in London, and so dependent on the Brabant markets for overseas distribution, the Hansards of the Steelyard, and indeed anyone involved in woollen exports, had now become particularly vulnerable to breaches in Anglo-Hapsburg diplomacy. A rift of major proportions occurred in September 1493, when Henry VII again suspended direct trade to and from the Lowlands. The most popular explanation for this embargo is that it was imposed in retaliation for the reception accorded the latest pretender to Henry's throne, Perkin Warbeck, by the Duchess of Burgundy.<sup>2</sup> Whether or not the ban was,

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<sup>1</sup> HA Köln Hanse III K 11/5, 32, 35, 36, 48, 80, 86, 88, 101.

<sup>2</sup> J.M. Bolton, *op. cit.*, 294; H. Buszello, "Köln und England 1468-1509", *op. cit.*, 458; O. de Smedt, De Engelse Natie te Antwerpen in de 16e Eeuw. (Antwerp, 1950), I 99-100.

therefore, the impulsive decision of a temperamental monarch who confused diplomacy with economic policy, is difficult to say. One thing is certain, though, the sanctions were not instigated by the great merchant fraternities in London. Records of the London mercers attest to this.<sup>3</sup>

Already in mid-July 1493 John Etwell, then governor of the English merchant community in the Lowlands, sent word to the mercers in London of the "syngler good will" of the town of Bruges, and a copy of a new one-year safe-conduct for Englishmen and their goods from the lord of Nassau, captain of Flanders.<sup>4</sup> This apparently was the fruit of Etwell's own initiatives, and suggests that the English had been having problems transporting their merchandise through Flanders. It must be remembered also, that this was accomplished during a summer of political transition in the Lowlands. Maximillian was about to be elected Emperor, and his son Philip soon would be the new archduke of the Burgundian dominions.

The mercers' assembly in London seemed very satisfied with the news from Bruges, but immediately received a subtle warning from the mayor that a royal envoy was to be sent overseas, and that the king alone would decide:

yf...we shall Repayre to the said towne  
[Bruges] havynge fyrst aswell a sure and lauffull  
cundith for us oure Marchaundyses and specially  
oure clothes for sure passage by the towne and  
Castell of Sluyse withoute interupcion  
prejudice or damage of the enhabytantes of the  
same.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Unless specifically noted, the following account of events leading up to the imposition of the embargo in September 1493 is based on the records of the London mercers printed in Acts of Court. 572ff.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 572-74.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 575.



However, a month later the London merchants still had heard nothing from the king or his chancellor. On 19th August Maximillian became Emperor. Philip the Fair was the new archduke. Finally, sometime between 26th August and 6th September, with the autumn fairs in Brabant only a few short weeks away, a delegation of London aldermen and representatives from the merchants' guilds went to the king's treasurer to enquire as to their sovereign's wishes regarding the Lowland trade. Still they received no direct reply, but were told instead to check with royal customs agents. They promptly did so and discovered, to their professed amazement, that Henry already had ordered the suspension of all traffic to and from the ports of the Emperor and the archduke. So, a decision had in fact been made twelve days to a month before the sanction eventually was proclaimed, and without consulting the merchant community. The mercers were left all the more bewildered, since passports for cross-Channel shipments had only recently been issued to them and to non-denizen merchants also.

It is unclear why Henry VII kept the Londoners at arm's length for so long. He knew full well that his edict would not be popular in the short term, yet he could also be reasonably certain of an accommodating response in the capital. It was not for loyal subjects of the king to question the royal prerogative, and loyal the merchant adventurers remained. They would abide by his decision so long as the prohibitions applied to Hansards and other foreign merchants as well as Englishmen. On September 16th a delegation of London merchants hastened to Northampton to voice this very concern to king Henry. Representatives from the Steelyard had preceded them, and already the Crown had extracted a monetary guarantee of £20,000 that they too would not ship directly to the restricted territories. The Hansards were, however, to be permitted to sail from England to the Zuider Zee port of Kampen. But the Londoners successfully prevailed upon the king to rescind

even this exemption, and require the Hansards to agree that:

...in cas any Englysche man wolde do shipp any goodes into theyre [Hanse] Shyppes now proposed into theyre Cuntrey he shalbe welcom unto theym and aswell there entreted amonges theym as they be amonge and with us here....<sup>6</sup>

And so, this is the way things stood on 18th September when the embargo was officially proclaimed,<sup>7</sup> and by the end of the month Etwell had been instructed to oversee the evacuation of the merchant adventurers and their communal property from Antwerp and Bergen op Zoom.

On the whole, the concerns expressed by the merchants of London were as predictable as they were rational. The Crown easily agreed to their recommendations, and so the entire exercise at Northampton helped to create the appearance that the merchant fraternities had some input vis à vis the foreign policy decisions of the government. In truth, though, Henry VII had not exempted the Hansards from similar sanctions in the late 1480s, and it stands to reason that he would not have considered doing so in 1493. Likewise, the principle that Englishmen be allowed to trade freely to Hanseatic ports was hardly something new. It had been confirmed as recently as two years before by the joint Anglo-Hanseatic assembly at Antwerp.

Nevertheless, and whatever the king's true motives, both the embargo and the concerns of the London mercers brought the Hanseatic trade into focus. Within England's foreign merchant community the Italians and Spaniards would not be affected much by the suspension of traffic

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 583.

<sup>7</sup> CPR, 1485-1494. 475, 477; H.J. Sait, Bronnen. (2) I no. 74; Tudor Economic Documents, ed. E. Power and R.H. Tawney, (London, 1924), II 6-9; G. Schanz, op. cit., II no. 85.



between England and the Lowlands, and the trade of the Brabanter was not vital to the national economy. But the same could not be said of the Hansards, who usually accounted for roughly one third of London's overseas trade, not to mention their importance in other places, like Hull, Ipswich and Lynn. The confirmation of article four of the Utrecht treaty, wrested from the Hanse at Antwerp in 1491, had not, in itself, provided sufficient incentive for an expansion of the English overseas trade network. The merchant adventurers were still exceedingly dependent on the cross-Channel trade. Whether it was intended to or not, then, the embargo of 1493 could not help but test the validity and usefulness of the reciprocal agreement with the Hanse, since it would have the residual effect of forcing denizen merchants to develop and utilize alternative commercial networks for their overseas trade. English merchants were entitled, theoretically at least, to trade to Hanseatic ports, and with the Lowland trade severed they virtually would have to do so or else seek other alternatives. And the Hansards, mindful of the commitment made at Antwerp and of their delicate position in England, would be obliged to let them. But were the merchant adventurers equal to the challenge?

The Hansards in London had ships laden with cloth and ready to sail by October 14th. And, in accordance with the most recent agreement that Englishmen would be welcome to come to Hanseatic ports, at least one English shipper, Steven Bull, was prepared to sail with them, provided the London merchants were willing to lade his ship. But the skipper's offer appeared to catch the merchant adventurers completely unprepared. They hesitated, almost as if they had never seriously contemplated the option that now presented itself. Adept at voicing complaints about the Hansards and other "straungers" to the king, they were equally slow to come to grips with the reality of the embargo and to develop a contingency plan for their export trade. As a result, by

mid-October, the Hansards of the Steelyard seemed about to gain an advantage. They had bound themselves for an extortionate sum not to ship directly to the Lowlands, but unlike their English rivals they were not about to sit idle while Henry waged his economic war on the Hapsburgs.

On the morning of October 15th an angry mob waxed riotous at the gates of the London Steelyard. Warehouses were damaged, and the mayor had to send a contingent of armed men to disperse the crowd. The following day wardens of the merchant guilds were summoned before the chancellor, who charged them to keep the public peace and ensure that an armed guard was posted nightly at the Hanseatic enclave.<sup>8</sup> He further recommended that the merchants take advantage of their opportunity to ship with Hanseatic carriers and trade to Hanseatic ports. But therein lie the dilemma, for the mercers were "not advised or in purpos at this tyme to shipp any goodes with the said Esterlinges".<sup>9</sup> So instead they set about drafting a proposal that all shipments by foreigners be banned, on grounds that the Hansards had been buying more cloth than usual and that they "of lyklyhode" intended to ship it to the lands of the archduke. It is questionable whether this petition ever reached the chancellor. The last references to it in the mercers' records indicates the fellowship was hedging on a formal petition for fear it might offend the king, who, whether by chance or

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<sup>8</sup> Acts of Court. 589-90. A passage from the Drapers' Wardens rolls cited in A.H. Johnson, The History of the Worshipful Company of the Drapers of London. (Oxford, 1914), I 141-42, indicates the watch at the Steelyard lasted seventeen days, but gives the incorrect date of 12th September for the riot. Johnson also referred to Grafton's Chronicle, which apparently gives the date as the Tuesday before St. Edward's Day (October 13th), whereas two days after that day would be correct. It is important to note that the insurrection came after the Hansards already had bound themselves to abide by the prohibitions, in order not to draw the false conclusion, as Johnson did, that the riot caused the King to include the Hansards in the ban.

<sup>9</sup> Acts of Court. 590.



design, had given English merchants a clear opportunity to penetrate the Hanseatic markets and trade routes they professed to covet. In this respect, though, the merchant adventurers appear to have been their own worst enemy.

The Hansards were by no means happy with the situation either. The embargo had been imposed on the eve of the St. Bravo fair at Antwerp, and the men of the Steelyard had several thousand pounds worth of goods ready for export from the English capital. Their shipments now had to be re-routed to Hamburg, which was not subject to the prohibition. However, some carriers were forced by storm to Zealand anyway. Driven to exasperation, Cologne's merchants requested the Crown's indulgence in consideration of the circumstances and the fact that the cargoes were intended for the market at Frankfurt. The Cologners were prepared to leave England if King Henry took any further punitive action against them, but in this instance he chose not to force the issue.<sup>10</sup> Otherwise, though, the restrictions were enforced, and the resultant disruption of sailings to Zealand and Brabant presented substantial and costly difficulties for the Steelyard. In order to reintegrate their London trade with the east-west axis of the continental network, Hansards now were required to divert seaborne cargoes far northward and funnel traffic through Hamburg. Later appeals from Cologne to Henry and his parliament to allow merchants to transship goods via Groningen and Kampen initially proved unsuccessful. Instead, the Cologners were obliged to rely on inland links between Hamburg and the Rhineland via Stade, Osnabrück and Münster, which, though not unfamiliar, hinged on obtaining the co-operation of numerous bishops, princes and territorial magnates.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> HUR. XI no. 710, 723.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., no. 713, 715, 743, 769, 781-86.

Aware that Henry VII's prohibition hurt the denizen cloth weavers and merchants as well as foreign merchants, Duke Philip and his father resisted the temptation to retaliate immediately, but instead engaged patiently in a veritable war of nerves with the English sovereign until the following spring, by which time it had become abundantly clear to the king that his English merchant adventurers were incapable of sustaining their export trade without a cross-Channel gateway. And so, in April 1494, he took the next logical step open to him, and declared a free market at Calais. English cloth exports to northern Europe were to be stapled there, and foreign visitors were accorded the same trading freedoms as they had at Bergen op Zoom and Antwerp. This forced the hand of the Hapsburgs, and they immediately countered with a total embargo on English wool and cloth throughout the Lowlands. They were powerless to prevent the English from bringing their woollens to Calais. Nor could they stop potential buyers from attending the newly proclaimed market there. But they could and would make it exceedingly difficult for anyone to move English cloth to inland markets once it had crossed the Channel.<sup>122</sup>

The subsequent Interegnum effectively suspended direct trade between England and the Lowlands for the better part of two years, though how stringently the Hapsburg edict was enforced is open to question. Early on, Maximillian sold special licences that exempted some individuals, and a threat of increased vigilance in January 1495, in response to complaints from Flanders, suggests that enforcement may have been rather haphazard. Certificates for commercial traffic to and from Antwerp also reflect inconsistencies. A Florentine merchant attempting to bring English cloth coastwise from Calais to Antwerp had his cargo seized at Vlissingen. There

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid., no. 729; G. Schanz, op. cit., II no. 5.



were other confiscations as well, and merchants from Augsburg, Breslau and Memmingen, shipping textiles to Cologne and Leipzig, made declarations that none of the stuff was English. Yet other agents of Strasbourg merchants made no attempt to conceal their intent to transship English cloth.<sup>13</sup> Certainly by September 1495 the restrictions in the Lowlands had been relaxed, but Bergen op Zoom was proclaimed the staple for English woollen imports and a heavy tax of one gold florin - the Andiesgulden - was levied on each English broadcloth.<sup>14</sup>

Henry VII's trade sanction was more strictly observed, and the Hansards were held to their £20,000 obligation throughout its duration. Shipments intended for Cologne and southern markets were re-routed from Calais to Hamburg and brought southward again via the inland routes.<sup>15</sup> And there were other difficulties for the Steelyard. In the autumn of 1494 royal customs officers in London again impounded a consignment of imported silk belonging to Cologne merchants. It had been shipped quite legally from Hamburg, and its seizure ran contrary to what Cologne felt had been agreed to at Antwerp two years before. With the resumption of formal discussions between English and Hanseatic representatives already postponed until the summer of 1495, the Cologners found themselves with little economic leverage in this instance. They contemplated an intentional reduction in their trade to England, and both Danzig and Lübeck were

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<sup>13</sup> J.H. Munro, "Bruges and the abortive Staple in English Cloth", op. cit., 1150-52; G. Schanz, op. cit., II no. 6; R. Doehaerd, Etudes, II no. 925, 1006, 1020, 1032, 1042-43, 1053, 1116.

<sup>14</sup> Actually the tax applied as well to other cheaper English textiles, although they paid proportionately less: frieses and kerseys 3s. each, stockbreds 1s. 3d., and "huls" or "hulse laken" 6s. ARA, CC. 23250.

<sup>15</sup> HA Köln Hanse III K 11/48, 49, 84, 111, 121, 162; HUB, XI no. 835, 910. Evidently the Hansards eventually were able to use Kampen as well. Ibid., no. 904, 959.

agreeable. Yet Cologners and Esterlings alike knew full well that a boycott of English trade would be ineffective unless it had the support of other member towns.<sup>16</sup> And in the end, the grievance apparently did not warrant the risk of disrupting the already modified trade network any further.

Anglo-Burgundian negotiations eventually resulted in the lifting of the trade embargoes, and culminated in February 1496 with a new commercial treaty, the much heralded Magnus Intercursus, by which the prohibitions of 1493-94 were officially ended and English merchants exempted from any new tolls or taxes in the Lowlands.<sup>17</sup> Although the Intercursus reopened Brabant to the English cloth export trade, its potential impact on a return to the old distribution network was not as great or immediate as it might have been, because the levying of the Andiesgulden remained a very contentious issue in Anglo-Burgundian trade circles well into the late 1490s. Moreover, by Duke Philip's reform edict of 1495 collection of the ducal water toll at Antwerp had resumed, and its imposition on English shippers went contrary to the terms of the new treaty. In fact, the merchant adventurers lobbied successfully for relief from it in 1496.<sup>18</sup> But the florin of St. André was quite another matter.

Henry VII had expressly forbidden Englishmen in the Lowlands to pay the new tax on cloth. However, in the spring of 1496, when English merchants indeed refused payment they were forcibly arrested and brought before

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., no. 777, 786.

<sup>17</sup> H.J. Smit, Bronnen. (2) I no. 96; PRO. E30/624, 667, 638-39, 648-49, 651, 661, 663-64, 1331-33, 1412, 1419, 1428, 1434; Foedera. XII 578-88; Tudor Economic Documents, ed. E. Power and R.H. Tawney, (London, 1924), II 11-15.

<sup>18</sup> S.T. Bindhoff, op. cit., 52-57; Acts of Court. 609-10; ARA. CC. cartons, series I, 1-4 no. 103-04.



the chancellor and lords of the Council of Brabant, who commanded them to pay, irrespective of their sovereign's instructions. And so they did. Upon learning that the merchants had disobeyed his directive the king was furious, and he promptly commanded them to discretely evacuate from the duke's lands and return to England. By September 1496, only half a year after the Intercursus had been proclaimed, English and Hanseatic merchants were once again forbidden to ship cloth directly to the Lowland ports. Once again too, Calais became the staple for English cloth.<sup>17</sup>

These measures were still in force in the spring of 1497. The merchants of the Steelyard were bound to the royal treasury for a sum of £18,000 not to ship cloth directly to the Lowlands, and shippers from Hamburg and Danzig, their vessels laden with cloth at London, were ordered to procure certificates from towns where they discharged their cargoes, in order to satisfy the Crown that they did not violate the sanctions.<sup>20</sup> Following summer meetings between Burgundian envoys and English officials, cross-Channel shipments were resumed to Antwerp's St. Bravo fair in September, and the Cologners, at least, believed that collection of the Andriesgulden was to be suspended. Instead it was merely reduced in November to two shillings Flemish money on each broadcloth,<sup>21</sup> and the Cologners and their civic council were irate when the tariff was collected on the cargoes they brought to the St. Bravo fair. Cologne commended an attempt by the Steelyard merchants to introduce their own boycott of shipments to the Lowlands in the new year, but reluctantly advised against it, since the English were

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<sup>17</sup> Acts of Court. 599-618.

<sup>20</sup> HUB. XI no. 994; Antient Kalendars and Inventories of the Treasury of His Majesty's Exchequer. ed. F. Palgrave, (London, 1836), III 58.

<sup>21</sup> Acts of Court. 633-34; ARA. CC. 23250.

sending substantial quantities of cloth to the fairs despite the tax, and could conceivably corner a greater share of the trade if the Steelyard did not follow suit. Even so, some Cologners continued to avoid Brabant by shipping English cloth over Kampen up until the tax was discontinued in 1499.<sup>22</sup>

Hence, disagreements of paramount importance to the English/Brabantine/Hanseatic trade really were not resolved until the late 1490s, some three years after the proclamation of the Intercursus. And denizen cloth exports from London attest to this, with no appreciable surge prior to 1499-1500.<sup>23</sup> In the interim, since 1493, English merchant adventurers had made no significant inroads in the Hanseatic sector, and only the lifeline to Calais sustained their export trade. In the end, Henry VII's embargo and the resultant trade war with the Hapsburgs had done little to lessen the dependence of England's cloth export trade on traditional Lowland markets. The Hansards, to some extent, had done quite the opposite. The fairs in Brabant ultimately were more convenient, and if the Hansards expected to deal directly with foreign buyers in the Lowlands they necessarily had to concentrate their business activities there once trade had fully resumed. But if the trade also depended on getting English cloth to Frankfurt for subsequent distribution, and to a great extent it did, then Hanseatic merchants proved very adept at adjusting their transportation network to avoid the Anglo-Burgundian dispute. In the process they inevitably enhanced the importance of northern towns like Hamburg and Kampen, and strengthened

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<sup>22</sup> HA Köln Hanse III K 12/72, 74; HUB. XI no. 1020, 1033, 1046, 1072, 1129; J.H. Munro, "Bruges and the abortive Staple in English Cloth", op. cit., 1154; HR. (3) IV no. 57; G. Schanz, op. cit., II no. 7-14.

<sup>23</sup> E.M. Carus-Wilson and O. Coleman, op. cit., 111-12.



both the coastal trade to these ports and the inland routes that linked them to the Rhineland.

The reconvening of an Anglo-Hanseatic diet, agreed to at Antwerp in 1491, did not in fact happen until June 1499 at Bruges, by which time neither the fundamental issues nor the standard responses to them had changed.<sup>24</sup> The Hansards objected to commercial restrictions, and specifically to the parliamentary statute that prohibited the export of unshorn cloth. They argued that their charters granted immunity from such legislation, but the English envoys, of course, were not empowered to overturn parliamentary statutes. On the other side, a request for expanded English privileges in Prussia met with Danzig's familiar reply that unrestricted trade was not negotiable and that English merchants had the same rights as other non-Hansards who traded there. With no real movement on either side, prolongation of the discussions was pointless for the time being, and so the meetings adjourned with a simple reaffirmation of the status quo and Henry VII's offer to treat with the Hansards again in two years.

There was, though, at least one interesting and important sidelight to the Bruges talks. In 1474 Riga and some neighbouring Livonian towns had declined to ratify the Treaty of Utrecht, and as a result had been excluded from Hanseatic rights and privileges in England since then. However, in 1498 a delegation representing Riga and her neighbours had come to England and concluded an agreement with the Crown that would have granted tariff preferences for English merchants trading to Riga in exchange for Hanseatic rates on Livonian imports into England. Livonian merchants shipping goods out of the

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<sup>24</sup> Hanseatic records of the Bruges meetings are printed in HR. (3) VI no. 4. See also F. Schulz, op. cit. 146-49.

kingdom would have continued to pay royal customs and subsidies at the alien rate.<sup>25</sup> This sudden initiative by Riga was significant on at least two counts. It illustrated to the English the growing independence of yet another key member town of the Hanse, thereby undermining the consolidated Hanseatic position at the Bruges meetings. Secondly, from the Hanseatic perspective, the pact was blatantly tied to the self-interest of Livonian exporters in the bulk carriage trade, and therefore constituted a potentially fatal precedent vis à vis more comprehensive Hanseatic interests in England, particularly those of the Cologne, Westphalian and Hamburg merchants, who invested heavily in the English cloth export trade. Separate piecemeal commercial agreements that parcelled out trade concessions on an individual basis could not help but undermine the political credibility of the Hanse as a whole and pave the way for its ultimate disintegration. In the end, pressure from within the Hanseatic membership forced a delay in the ratifications of the pact, and in 1500 Riga endorsed the Utrecht treaty instead. Even so, yet another small crack in the facade of Hanseatic unity had been exposed by the English connection.<sup>26</sup>

Despite the unresolved differences, relations between the Hanse and England were largely without incident throughout the first decade of the new century. The maritime mayhem of past years subsided, and the Esterlings from Hamburg and Danzig solidified their grip on the Hanseatic trade to and from eastern England. English traders, realizing perhaps that their competitive potential at Danzig was not so limited as they had once believed, began to venture to the Baltic on a more regular basis. Likewise, although they were not happy about

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<sup>25</sup> HR. (3) IV no. 128-32.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. no. 143-44, 150#43,78, 151#16-18, 153#6, 195, 278-80, 295, 460.



them, Steelyard merchants apparently were resigned to the restrictions on exports of unshorn English cloth. Twice more the resumption of formal Anglo-Hanseatic talks was postponed,<sup>27</sup> as Henry VII's relationship with the Hapsburgs dominated the diplomatic stage in the early years of the decade. In 1502 Emperor Maximilian concluded a new commercial treaty with England,<sup>28</sup> but within two years relations soured, and the cycle of trade embargoes seemed set to begin all over again. The Hapsburgs were harbouring the fugitive duke of Suffolk, Edmund de la Pole, and Henry again responded with a ban on trade to the Lowlands. By mid-January 1505 a free market had been declared at Calais, and Cologners from the Steelyard were again diverting shipments of English cloth over Hamburg and Kampen.<sup>29</sup>

Yet out of this latest disruption came a concession that considerably stabilized the Anglo-Hanseatic relationship. Henry VII knew that his on again-off again trade embargoes played havoc with the Hanseatic trade out of England, and especially aggravated the merchants of the Steelyard, who were bitter enough over the inconclusive talks of 1499. The patience of the Steelyard fellowship was wearing thin, and since he evidently had achieved all he possibly could for English merchants desiring to go to the Baltic, the king was reluctant to antagonize the Hanseatic community in London any further. To offset the inconvenience of the new trade war with the Lowlands a parliamentary act was proclaimed, exempting Hansards from all the statutes that conflicted with their

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., no. 235, 240, 246, 279, 368, 484-85; H. Buszello, "Köln und England 1468-1509", op. cit., 464.

<sup>28</sup> PRO, E30/686.

<sup>29</sup> F. Schulz, op. cit., 151-52; H. Buszello, op. cit., 465; HR, (3) V no. 43; CPR, 1494-1509, 404-06.

charters.<sup>30</sup> Against the backdrop of Henry VII's continued reliance on trade sanctions to counter foreign diplomatic intrigues, the Steelyard merchants at last gained a guarantee of their established rights and freedoms in England - a development representative of an era of new-found amiability in Anglo-Hanseatic relations. The embargo ended early in 1506 when Archduke Philip agreed to extradite de la Pole, and a new commercial treaty, the Malus Intercursus, was ratified in September of that year,<sup>31</sup> but the legal status of Hansards in England already had been defined for years to come.

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<sup>30</sup> HR. (3) V no. 20-22, Statutes of the Realm. II 665; Urkundliche Geschichte des hansischen Stahlhofes zu London, ed. J.M. Lappenberg, no. 148.

<sup>31</sup> HR. (3) V no. 105#337-39; H.. Smit, Bronnen. (2) I no. 188, 198.



## VIII COMMERCIAL SYSTEMS 1492-1510 : THE TRADE STRUCTURE AT THE CLOSE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

### England and the northern Hanseatic network

The final decade of the fifteenth century and the first of the sixteenth witnessed one last revamping of the Anglo-Hanseatic trade. It reflected the needs and maximized the strengths of the principal interest groups within both the English and Hanseatic trading communities at the end of the medieval period. Adjustments in the Hanseatic trade in England had an especially profound bearing on the east coast ports, where, as in the past, a role in the Baltic trade ultimately went a long way in determining the prospects for mercantile prosperity or decline.

Nowhere was the relative importance of the Hanseatic trade more evident than at Boston.<sup>1</sup> Of the port's surviving customs particulars for the 1490s the most complete and useful are those for the fiscal year 1491-92, - a rather unrepresentative boom year for the alien trade, in which the Hansards were the key participants. Danziger Johann Hadersleff brought his ship to Boston in mid-October 1491, and left again in early November. He and four other Danzig skippers returned the following spring. While none of these ships carried any cargo to or from Boston for indigenous English merchants, they did account for almost all of the Hanseatic trade. The Esterlings only used English carriers to transfer cargo to neighbouring Lynn, although a ship from Haarlem also off-loaded another small consignment of litmus and tar for a Hanseatic merchant. The bulk cargo and wax

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<sup>1</sup> For Boston: PRO. E122 11/8, 14, 17, 18, 20, E356/24 Br.-10r.; E.M. Carus-Wilson and O. Coleman, op. cit., 110-13; Appendix A.1.1.

discharged from the Danzig vessels pushed the combined value of Hanseatic imports to well over £1,500. Additionally, the Danzigers refreighted 146 broadcloths and £190 worth of lead and coverlets.

However, this was really the last great surge in the Hanseatic trade at Boston. Cloth exports by Hansards had not topped a hundred units in any one year since the 1480s, and after the last of the Danzig ships weighed anchor at Boston in the summer of 1492, the Hanseatic trade virtually disappeared. Indeed the entire cloth export trade of the port, insignificant to begin with, all but evaporated during the final decade of the century. Likewise, the value of alien merchandise subject to the petty custom, which soared to £1,574 in 1491-92, would struggle to average £200 per annum over the next eighteen years, and the Hanseatic absence was a major factor. Poundage totals, representative of the combined trade in miscellaneous goods of non-Hanseatic aliens and denizens, reflect, perhaps, a somewhat higher degree of stability in the denizen sector. In fact there were some good years, especially from 1502 through 1504.

There is no obvious explanation for the increased Hanseatic presence at Boston or at nearby Lynn in 1492. Perhaps the trade at Hull, much diminished during the late 1480s, had not yet normalized, thereby prompting the continued diversion of some Baltic cargoes to the Wash ports. Although the value of the alien trade at Hull did show an increase in the Exchequer year 1491-92, it would be yet another year before the volume there reached and actually eclipsed levels attained during the early 1480s. Not so startling, in light of their steadily declining trade at Boston from the mid-1470s onward, is the departure of the Hansards. The woollen export trade was now firmly centred in London, and the Hanseatic import trade from Hamburg and the Baltic was served by the nearby East Anglian ports. Perhaps too, the Bergenfahrer, who traditionally supplied Boston with fish cargoes, had been



eased out as English competitors successfully tapped the Icelandic fisheries. Hansards from Danzig and Hamburg, whose Icelandic ventures were part of a range of comprehensive commercial interests linking the Baltic trade with England and the Atlantic seaboard, apparently had much stronger ties with Lynn than with Boston.

In any event, after 1492 the modest alien trade at Boston was devastated, and partly, no doubt, by the embargoes on traffic to and from the Lowlands. In 1493-94 the £42 worth of goods on which a single Hanseatic merchant paid the petty custom represented 80% of the aggregate non-denizen trade in miscellaneous merchandise. Essentially, this sector of Boston's overseas commerce was dormant until temporarily revived by the Intercursus and by the brief return of the Hansards. Though damaged to the extent that cargo values are no longer legible, the surviving particulars of account for 1496-97 show that two Hanseatic ships, both from Danzig, off-loaded bulk cargo and reladed lead and a few cloths. Coincidentally, the value of the non-denizen trade for that year rebounded to £270. Other foreign shippers from Zealand and Holland brought fish and wine cargoes, while most of the English tonnage was confined to the fleet carrying wool consignments across the Channel. But again, the resurgence was short-lived. Thenceforth both the aggregate alien trade and the Hanseatic portion of it remained negligible. The only surviving customs particulars for the first decade of the sixteenth century, - those for 1502-03 and 1506-07 - do not contain any references to Hanseatic trade at Boston, although for some other years the enrolments record a combined alien/Hanseatic total. The Hansards did not export any broadcloths from Boston after 1502, and the woollen trade there ceased to be of any importance.

Virtually no customs particulars for Hull have survived for the 1492-1510 period. However, the Exchequer enrolments do attest to a consistent and significant

Hanseatic presence there.<sup>22</sup> In 1492-93 the Hanseatic merchants accounted for one third of all cloth exports, and the value of their traffic in miscellanea exceeded that of denizens and non-Hanseatic aliens combined. In four other years for which Hanseatic totals are enrolled separately from others, Hansards were responsible for 54% to 76% of the trade in petty custom goods and one third of the cloth export trade. Moreover, during an eighteen-year span ending with the Exchequer year 1508-09, they imported 6,000 quintals of wax, which would have added another £12,000 to the value of the Hanseatic trade.<sup>23</sup>

Curiously, the disruption of trade with Zealand and Brabant in the mid-1490s apparently did not have much of an impact on the volume of overseas trade at Hull. Various Hull and York merchants had exchanged large quantities of cloth and lead for mixed cargo in Brabant during the late 1480s, yet even during the subsequent interruptions in the traffic to the Lowlands petty custom totals at Hull continued their steady climb, and the poundage and cloth export figures are not inconsistent with the general upward trend. At Newcastle too, any adverse affects of the embargoes are not obvious from trade statistics. Overall, though, while the cloth export trade of Hull recovered from the great slump of the 1480s, it did not improve on levels attained a decade earlier. The truly dynamic sector of the port's overseas trade was the exchange of other miscellaneous goods by denizen merchants, aliens and Hansards alike. Poundage and 3d. custom values not only recovered during the

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<sup>22</sup> For Hull: PRO. E122 63/13, E356/23 31r.-31v., E356/24 25r.-32r.; E.M. Carus-Wilson and O. Coleman, op. cit., 110-13; Appendix A.1.1.

<sup>23</sup> Of the 6,000 quintals of wax customed at Hull between Michaelmas 1491 and Michaelmas 1509, the 456 quintals for the Exchequer year 1501-02 are enrolled as a combined denizen/Hanseatic total. All the rest are identified as belonging to Hansards.



1490s, they were soaring to unprecedented highs by the turn of the century. No doubt an important factor in this growth was the trade to the Baltic, whence at least one Hull merchant, Roger Basell, sojourned in an attempt to establish direct business contacts with the Prussians. Yet there is little to suggest that the Yorkshire men themselves were particularly active in the Baltic trade. Records of ships passing through the Danish Sound in 1503, for instance, list ten or eleven different English shippers, but none of them were from Hull or Newcastle.<sup>4</sup>

There are no extant customs records for Newcastle for the years 1492 through 1494, but subsequent accounts are relatively complete, and they indicate a very modest overseas trade in comparison to Hull's.<sup>5</sup> Broadcloth exports of only a few dozen units per year were of little importance. Petty custom totals reflect the gradual and fairly consistent growth of the alien and Hanseatic trade up to 1510, but even so, the annual aggregate value only once exceeded £1,000 and for most years it was considerably less.

In 1494-95 the only substantial consignment of bulk cargo to be brought to Newcastle was off-loaded from the 'Gabrielle' of Danzig in late October 1494. When this ship left port the following February it was laden with coal, lead and only two cloths. Both the inbound and outbound cargoes were customed to the ship's master, Hans Laurence, and only one other Hansard. The simplicity of the commodity structure had not been altered by the end of the decade, as the Hanseatic traders continued to bring in wood, flax and iron to Newcastle in exchange for coal and lead, and from Michaelmas 1497 to Michaelmas

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<sup>4</sup> Rigsarkivet Oresundstoldregnskaber 1503; G. Schanz, op. cit., II no. 94.

<sup>5</sup> For Newcastle: PRO, E122 108/4-9, 12, E356/24 57r.-62r.; E.M. Carus-Wilson and O. Coleman, op. cit., 110-13; Appendix A.1.1.

1502 they accounted for a third of the total value of goods customed to non-denizens. Not surprisingly, the principal link was with the Baltic. All of the Hanseatic merchandise recorded between Michaelmas 1499 and Michaelmas 1502 was carried by a total of only four ships, - three from the Baltic and one from Hamburg. The value of imports was £254 and that of exports, excluding thirteen broadcloths, was £152. In the summer of 1506, though, three Danzig ships carried £396 worth of freight for Hansards, but more than half of this value was assigned to their lead exports. The inbound freight, as well as the cargoes laden for export in the Danzig vessels, was customed only to Hansards, and the corresponding port books of Danzig also confirm that ownership of the lead cargoes subsequently discharged from these ships was confined to the Esterlings themselves, who evidently dominated the trade between Newcastle and the Baltic.<sup>4</sup>

Of special significance the traffic between England and the Baltic in the late fifteenth century was trade of the port of Lynn. There had been sustained commercial contact between the East Anglian port and Danzig even during the worst of times in the late 1480s, and the substantial role of denizen merchants was especially important. While Englishmen from other east coast ports ranted against the Esterlings and shunned the Baltic market in favour of Brabant, a small nucleus of merchants from Lynn strove to build a modest overseas trade at the Prussian staple by diversifying their limited export base and placing ships on the Baltic route. In both the long run and the short, this undoubtedly stood them in good

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<sup>4</sup> Skippers Cort Gisloff, Jacob Canbrachter and Clays Manseke: PRD. E122 108/12. Although he called at Newcastle only once in 1506, Gisloff off-loaded two lead cargoes at Danzig. This suggests, perhaps, that he also may have hauled lead from some other English port such as Hull or Lynn. A third entry in the Danzig port book has Gisloff bringing in rice, figs, sugar and cloth, quite possibly from Brabant. Canbrachter brought his lead cargo home to Danzig, but Manseke, who left Hartlepool on 20th July, is not listed in the port book for 1506. WAPB. 300.19/9 50r., 64r., 87v., 122r.



stead. Over the next two decades, as the traffic at Boston declined steadily and the bulk import trade in northern England was left largely to the Esterlings, the established Baltic link remained the cornerstone of Lynn's maritime commerce. With little evidence to suggest that Yorkshire merchants in particular took advantage of their newly confirmed status at Danzig after 1491, the success of Lynn's Baltic trade is all the more noteworthy. It is a further indication that access to the Prussian staple depended not so much on statutes as on secure shipping lanes and the energetic pursuit of mutually beneficial business relationships within the broad commercial network. To a considerable degree the trade between Danzig and Lynn integrated the business interests of both the Lynn merchants and their Prussian counterparts.

A marked increase in the overseas trade of Lynn during 1492 and 1493 was attributable mainly to the Hanseatic sector. Broadcloth exports for the two years totaled 962 units, of which 818 were customed to Hanseatic merchants. And, by topping £1,370 in both years, the value of petty custom goods also exceeded previous annual averages. For the Exchequer year 1491-92 the Hanseatic share, enrolled separately from that of other alien merchants, constituted 89% of the total. Further, Hanseatic wax imports for this and the following year totaled seventy quintals.<sup>7</sup> After that, a drastic reduction in the overseas trade foreshadowed a four-year slump in woollen exports, likely exacerbated somewhat by the Lowland embargoes. But by 1494-95, the first year of the 1490s for which particulars of customs permit a clear delineation of the trade, the traffic in miscellaneous merchandise already had begun to show signs of stabilizing.

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<sup>7</sup> Appendix A.1.1; PRO. E122 98/12, 13, E356/23 49r.

In October 1494 a Hamburg ship departed Lynn laden with thirty broadcloths, plus coal, Suffolk cheese and coverlets valued at £10 for the shipper and four other Hansards. A Danzig ship also cleared port in mid-May the following year. Though this vessel's arrival is not recorded, its outbound cargo consisted of eight cloths and £113 worth of hides, lead and coverlets for three Hansards, and £8 worth for local merchant Richard Peper. Four more Danzig ships called at Lynn between 19th May and 4th September 1495. All of them discharged bulk freight and reladed cargo for export. These ships, from Danzig and Hamburg, carried all of the Hanseatic woollen exports from Lynn, and while the volume was not significant in light of the generally depressed cloth trade at this time, the use of these particular carriers again emphasizes the importance of Lynn's Baltic connections. These same shippers freighted £131 worth of exports and £121 worth of imports, and therefore were responsible for half of the aggregate value of the alien trade in miscellaneous goods for the Exchequer year 1494-95. Worthy of note too is the fact that diverse commodities such as lead and coverlets could, in combination with cloth exports, push the Hanseatic trade balance at Lynn in favour of the export trade.<sup>u</sup>

Something else that distinguished the trade of Lynn even further from that of Boston, Hull and Newcastle was an apparent coalescence of denizen and Hanseatic interests vis à vis the Baltic. English merchants shipped fourteen broadcloths and £15 worth of miscellaneous exports with the Baltic carriers and, although the Hanseatic ships did not carry inbound cargo for denizens, the Lynn merchants almost certainly sent their own vessel to Hamburg or the Baltic in the summer of 1495. William Cufford, master of the 'Katern' of Lynn, returned home

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<sup>u</sup> Appendix A.1.1; PRO. E122 98/14, E356/23 49r.



in July carrying osmund, tar, counters and "pruce skynnes" belonging to eight different English merchants. Among them were Robert Bees and John Brekersley, who, along with the shipper Cufford and at least two other members of the group, had invested in prior commercial ventures to the Baltic. Bees and his colleague Richard Peper, moreover, were among those merchants who exported cloths and other goods in the Danzig ships that same summer."

The degree to which industries in and near Lynn depended on Baltic imports is difficult to say. Undoubtedly the small consignments of ashes and dyestuffs helped sustain the modest textile industry, and the local and regional shipyards probably took much of the pitch, tar, lumber and iron. Also, local merchants, including those who traded to the Baltic, took stockfish and other goods by boat to the Sturbridge fair near Cambridge.<sup>10</sup> Another principal Baltic import, flax, may have been used in the local production of linens, or even more extensively in the manufacture of rope, cable and cordage, especially during the naval expansion begun under Henry VII. In the mid-1490s the clerk of the king's ships at Portsmouth was buying "ropes of dyvers compasses and byggenes of lyne [Lynn] and Normandy makyng", and sent an agent to Lynn to purchase cordage for the royal warship 'Regent'. In 1497 his inventory for a new ship, the 'Sweepstake', also included new cable and "a Tye of iiii Strondes" bought at Lynn. The clerk's account shows that most cordage came in fact from Genoa or Normandy, but any that did not was

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid. For prior Baltic ventures involving these Lynn merchants see for example HR. (3) II no. 511#1-8,18,19.

<sup>10</sup> PRO. C1/302/57, C1/316/65, printed in D.M. Owen, op. cit., 260-62.

manufactured and/or purchased at Lynn and brought coastwise to the royal dockyards on the south coast.<sup>11</sup>

The Exchequer year 1496-97 saw both the aggregate value of petty custom merchandise and total woollen exports at Lynn plunge to their lowest levels since the mid-1470s. There was, however, a corresponding increase in the Hanseatic presence at Boston. In any event, it is imperative to recognize just how unrepresentative this year was for the port of Lynn, because it is the first for which the registers of the toll collectors of the Danish Sound survive. These toll records, and especially those running consecutively during the mid-sixteenth century, are a principal quantitative source for the study of northern trade and shipping. The earliest account, however, must be interpreted with considerable caution. Since Lynn was the leading east coast port in terms of denizen participation in the Anglo-Baltic trade, it is to be expected that in an extremely poor and untypical year for the port's overseas traffic no English skippers are listed in the Sound toll register. The register for 1497 should not be regarded as a fair barometer of English traffic to and from the Baltic during most of the 1490s.<sup>12</sup>

Almost predictably, the volume of trade at Lynn increased substantially after 1497, and a relatively consistent level was maintained throughout the next four

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<sup>11</sup> Naval accounts and inventories of the reign of Henry VII, 1485-8 and 1495-7. ed. M. Oppenheim, Publications of the Navy Records Society VIII, (1896), 243-44, 246-47, 251-52, 281, 298. A local rope and thread industry had existed at Lynn at least since the early fifteenth century. M.A.S. Hickmore, op. cit., 93-96. For the regional cultivation and use of flax and hemp see N. Evans, The East Anglian Linen Industry. (Aldershot, Hants., 1985), 1-55.

<sup>12</sup> Rigsarkivet Oresundstoldregnskaber 1497; N.E. Bang, Tabeller over Skibsfart og Varentransport gennem Oresund 1497-1660. (Leipzig, 1906, 1932), I 2-3. The petty custom figure for Lynn in 1497 is enrolled as a combined alien/Hanseatic aggregate, and a small quantity of wax, which was a typical Baltic import, was customed to denizens. PRO. E356/23 50r.



years as the value of petty custom goods averaged £800 per annum. Cloth exports, both denizen and Hanseatic, also began to recover during this period, and by the turn of the century the overall trend was one of growth in overseas commerce. The key link continued to be the Baltic, and its central importance is clearly evident in the customs particulars for 1503-04.<sup>13</sup> Cloth exports were consistent with the general upward trend, and the volume of goods paying the 3d. custom, though higher than the average for the first decade of the new century, was not unrepresentative for the period.

In November 1503 William Sanderson, one of six Lynn skippers to have passed through the Sound that calendar year,<sup>14</sup> returned to his home port with a typical Baltic cargo of rafters, eels, platters and Prussian chests belonging to four local merchants. In the spring three more English ships departed Lynn laden with cloths, coverlets, hides and lead for Hanseatic as well as denizen merchants.<sup>15</sup> They arrived home together at the end of July, and their bulk cargoes, also shared by a Hanseatic agent, strongly suggest they were returning from the Baltic. No fewer than seven Hanseatic ships from Danzig also called at Lynn during the summer. On their outward voyage the English vessels had carried 190 broadcloths, or a full 43% of denizen woollen exports for the Exchequer year. Moreover, the £428 worth of miscellaneous imports and exports freighted by English merchants in Lynn and Danzig ships constituted 23% of the denizen trade in miscellanea. So far as the Hanseatic merchants were concerned, all of their broadcloth

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<sup>13</sup> PRO. E122 98/16, also printed in N.S.B. Gras, *op. cit.*, 647-84.

<sup>14</sup> Rigsarkivet Oresundstoldregnskaber 1503; N.E. Bang, *op. cit.*, I 2-3.

<sup>15</sup> PRO. E122 98/16. The 'Peter', the 'Trinite' and the 'John' of Lynn, captained by William Chamberlyn, Robert Sanderson and William Davyson, left Lynn on 24th April 1504.

exports, totaling 123 units, were shipped with these Lynn and Danzig carriers. The value of other goods, which consisted mainly though not exclusively of imports in the Danzig ships, amounted to half the alien trade for the year. The Hansards also owned an additional fifty quintals of wax.

Skipper Sanderson's indisputable presence at the Sound in the autumn of 1503, together with the complete particulars of account for the subsequent summer, which indicate with relative certainty that at least three more Lynn ships made return voyages to Prussia, permit an approximate evaluation of the overall importance of the Baltic to Lynn's overseas trade. Broadcloth exports from Lynn during the Exchequer year 1503-04 totalled 572 units, and the shippers from Lynn and Danzig who sailed to the Baltic carried 313 of them. The combined Baltic shipments of English and Esterling merchants therefore accounted for 55% of Lynn's woollen export trade. The value of denizen and Hanseatic goods shipped to or from the Baltic was £974, while the overseas trade of the port as a whole was £2,879.<sup>14</sup> Hence, the Baltic connection also drew 34% of Lynn's aggregate overseas trade in goods other than cloth, wool and wine. In all, twenty-four Lynn merchants or ships' masters were involved, while the Hanseatic participation was left to the skippers of the Danzig ships and a half dozen other Esterlings. Regrettably, the customs particulars for 1503-04 are the only ones to have survived for the first decade of the

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<sup>14</sup> The aggregate value of Lynn's trade in miscellaneous goods other than cloth, wool and wine has been calculated by starting with the £2,333 worth of merchandise on which poundage was paid by both non-Hanseatic aliens and denizens: PRO. E356/23 55v. To this has been added the value of Hanseatic goods (£446) subject to the petty custom, as derived from the particulars of account. The alien share of 3d. custom merchandise is omitted, since non-Hanseatic aliens also paid poundage, and therefore the value of this trade is included in poundage totals. Finally, the value of Hanseatic wax imports (50 quintals, sic. £100) is added to the aggregate. Indigenous merchants did import some wax as well, but the value apparently is included in poundage figures.



sixteenth century. Nevertheless, interpreted in context with the enrolled trade statistics for the period, they may be taken as fairly representative of both the structure and volume of Lynn's Baltic trade at this time.<sup>17</sup>

The integrated commercial interests of the two merchants' groups did not mean that the Esterlings and the merchants of Lynn coexisted in perfect harmony. Occasionally old personal feuds surfaced, as was the case when an action of trespass and battery resulted in the arrest of Danzig skipper Lutkyn Molner. Claiming that the plaintiff had born "grete males" against him "of longe tyme", Molner appealed to the Chancellor to intervene on his behalf, since he was "a straunger and unknowen" in Lynn, and therefore not permitted to plead his case fairly there. In 1497 Lynn merchants accused the Hanseatic Bergenfahrer of the deliberate drowning of fishermen from Cromer and Blakeney, and an attempt by another Danzig captain to defraud royal customs agents at Lynn also embarrassed the Hanseatic merchants there in 1499. By and large, though, the relationship between the local business community and the Hansards at Lynn must have been amiable. Of those numerous denizens who traded to the Baltic, many were or later would become prominent Lynn burgesses. They routinely did business with a small community of resident Esterlings with whom they had become well acquainted over a period of several years. By the early sixteenth century the Hanseatic house on the river Ouse had come to be called the "Stylehoff", after the great London comptoir. Its governor was Hamburg merchant/shipper Lutkyn Smyth, a familiar face in the Wash ports for over thirty years.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> A list of Hanseatic merchants and skippers appended to the particulars of account contains twelve names, but not that of the leader of the Hanseatic community, Lutkyn Smyth, who exported eighty cloths in the English ships. PRO. E122 98/16.

<sup>18</sup> HUB. XI no. 1229; PRO. C1/267/16; 45th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the  
(Footnote Continued)

There are very few records on which to base an evaluation of the role of Ipswich and Colchester in the trade to Hamburg and the Baltic. Customs particulars for 1491-92 show that of the 209 broadcloths exported by Hansards that year 159 were freighted with Cort Defort in August 1492. The other fifty had been shipped by Cologners of the London Steelyard the previous November. Defort also took with him £25 worth of lead for an indigenous merchant, Thomas Drayle. The skipper's destination can not be determined with certainty, but the cargoes he discharged at London the year before, together with the timing of his arrivals and departures, indicate he was plying the Hamburg route. Indeed, the cargo he brought to Ipswich/Colchester in June 1492 would tend to support this assumption, for along with consignments of wax, lumber, osmund and fish, it included various linens, "hedelaken", "osnibrygge" (Osnabrück) and "homberecloth" (Hamburgcloth). It accounted for over half the total value of Hanseatic petty custom goods. The remainder consisted primarily of fish cargoes brought in by Hanseatic vessels, probably from Iceland via Hamburg.<sup>19</sup>

Subsequent customs enrolments indicate the almost total disappearance of the Hanseatic cloth trade at Ipswich/Colchester after 1492, even though Hansards continued to do business there on a fairly regular basis. The Lowland embargo was a serious setback for the overall trade, but the traffic in miscellaneous goods was stabilizing by the late 1490s, and denizen cloth exports accelerated dramatically in the years following the

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(Footnote Continued)

Public Records, appendix 2. 6; Urkundliche Geschichte des hansischen Stahlhofes zu London. ed. J.M. Lappenberg, 212. Of the Lynn merchants in the Baltic trade, William Trewe had been elected burgess of parliament in 1504, and others such as Richard Amfles, Richard Peper, Christopher Brodbank, Richard Harde and Humphry Wolle all were important civic figures. Historical Manuscripts Commission 11th Report. (London, 1887), 171-72.

<sup>19</sup> PRO. E122 53/8,9.



Intercursus. However, petty custom figures are enrolled as combined alien/Hanseatic totals, and therefore reveal little more about the Hanseatic trade at Ipswich and Colchester. But with the men of the Steelyard no longer transshipping cloth, the traffic in imported goods undoubtedly became the primary focus of the Hanseatic trade. There is no doubt too that this trade served the English capital as well as the Essex and Suffolk ports. A complaint about the quality of "Spruse flax" purchased by a London grocer from Colchester clothman Richard Barker in the 1490s indicates that even bulk imports from the Baltic found their way to London via Colchester.<sup>20</sup>

In fact, Ipswich and Colchester, once busy outports for the Steelyard's cloth export trade, were now, insofar as the Hansards were concerned, merely depots for bulk freight brought in by the Esterlings. Particulars of accounts for 1505-06 provide an excellent illustration of this. A single Danzig captain, Urban Some, off-loaded a standard Baltic cargo of clapholts, wainscots, bowstaves and wax in May 1506. He returned home on three separate occasions, each time laden with cloth for Danzig merchants. Yet the Hansards shipped no cloth from Ipswich/Colchester that year, and indeed Some's departure from there is not recorded. Nor did he call at London or Newcastle. If the cloth he took back to the Baltic was from England, and this is not certain, then it had to have been picked up at Hull and/or Lynn: the only other English ports where Hansards had woollens customed for export. Urban Some was no stranger to Lynn, having called there two years previous, although the size of the cargoes he discharged at Danzig suggests they may well have been laden at Hull, where the volume of Hanseatic trade was much greater. Of course, they may just as well have come from the Lowlands too. In any case Ipswich and

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<sup>20</sup> PRO. E356/23 23r.-25v., E356/24 18r.-20r., C1/206/16; Appendix A.1.1.

Colchester now served the Hansards only as import depots.<sup>21</sup>

Possibly this trend, coupled with the relatively stable denizen woollen trade and the recent reiteration of the English status in Prussia, began to stimulate local interest in the distant Baltic market. In 1507 the apprentice of one John Caldwell, an Ipswich merchant, was alleged to have purchased nearly £200 worth of goods at the Prussian staple through the agency of Danzig merchant Hans Stendell. Stendell claimed that Caldwell's man, Thomas Bradde, had not paid for the merchandise and that he also owed £4 for board and lodging in Danzig. Bradde was arrested there, but his master denied any knowledge of the business.<sup>22</sup> To what degree the interests of Suffolk merchants in Prussia may have suffered as a result of this incident is impossible to tell, since the extent of their trade there is unknown. However, it could have done little to enhance their short-term prospects for an increased share in the Baltic market.

Other than the ships from Lynn, the only English vessels passing through the Sound in 1503 were recorded as being "aff Lunden i England". Four or perhaps five London skippers are listed in the toll register, yet only two of them appear in the corresponding particulars of customs for London. Hence, it is possible that the others may have cleared the Thames in ballast or actually departed from some other port. William Sayer sailed to the Baltic twice in 1503, departing each time with modest cloth cargoes for English merchants. The other captain, John Scott, also carried a denizen woollen cargo. Unlike the Lynn merchants, Londoners do not appear to have utilized Hanseatic carriers on the Baltic route. Huge

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<sup>21</sup> PRO. E122 53/17,18; Appendix A.1.1; WAP6. 300.19/9 119v., 155r., 155v.

<sup>22</sup> PRO. C1/160/5-8.



cargoes of bulk freight and enormous quantities of wax were off-loaded in London from Hanseatic ships likely coming directly from Danzig and Hamburg. Yet, in keeping with past norms, few if any Englishmen are listed as owning cargo in these ships.<sup>23</sup>

The same held true for the ships returning to Danzig with cloth cargoes. They apparently carried very little for Englishmen, although the total volume of direct trade to the Prussian staple was quite substantial. When, in 1497, skippers Hans Gerdesson and Hans Hanekowe were instructed to obtain certificates from their home port of Danzig to prove where they off-loaded cargo, they already had laden their hulks at London with one hundred and twenty-three "terlyngen off packeen myt Engelschen lakene und cottone russz". In this instance the ratio of terlings to packs is unclear, but a terling commonly consisted of at least twenty cloths and a pack half that many. A year later Gerdesson and Hanekowe each off-loaded cloth cargoes at Danzig ranging from 22 to 26 terlings. If up to half a dozen Danzig carriers freighted similar volumes yearly from London, then it is possible that the direct seaborne shipments to Danzig may have consumed 2,000 or more of the Steelyard's annual cloth exports, exclusive of the shipments to Hamburg that were transshipped eastward as well. Another shipper on the London/Danzig run, Simon Merkenbeck, also off-loaded eighteen terlings at Danzig in 1498.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Rigsarkivet Oresundstoldregnskaber 1503; PRO. E122 80/2. Sayer left London on 13th March and again on 19th June. John Scott left with cloth cargoes on 22nd March and 8th July. His name is entered late in the Sound toll book for 1503, which suggests only a single voyage to Danzig. However, a London skipper with the surname Scott is also listed twice (ie. entering and leaving the Sound) much earlier in the year. So, perhaps both Sayer and John Scott sailed twice to the Baltic that summer.

<sup>24</sup> HUB. XI no. 994, 1055; WAPG. 300.19/8 157v., 168v. Actually the Danzig port books for 1498-99 contain three separate entries for Gerdesson, who brought more than fifty terlings of cloth in total. Ibid., 56r., 130r., 170v.

The pattern was much the same during the next decade, at least for London's Baltic trade. Arrivals of English and Prussian ships laden with woollens from London are recorded in the extant Danzig port books for 1506, and a number of the skippers completed their return voyage more than once during the shipping season. Hanseatic vessels did freight some cloth for denizens, but it was rare for an Esterling to employ an English carrier. Consignments of Gascon wine were also carried in the English ships, and several dozen London merchants may have had interests in these Baltic ventures.<sup>23</sup> The transactions at Danzig, however, likely were entrusted to a handful of English agents in Prussia or to those who travelled there with the ships. It is entirely plausible too that the Londoners used some of the same Hanseatic factors who served merchants of the Steelyard.

In London the permanent Hanseatic community was perhaps somewhat smaller than it had been a quarter century earlier, although the volume of trade had risen considerably. About three dozen Hansards, including ships' masters, exported cloth from the English capital in 1506. A few more than that shared the import cargoes. Much of the trade from Hamburg was looked after by Lutkyn Buring and Hans van Tynsen. Hermann Plough, Albrecht Gyse and Tylman Blanck were among the more prominent Danzigers. The severely damaged particulars of accounts for 1507-08 also show about thirty-six different Hansards exporting cloth from the Steelyard.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> For some of the skippers on the London/Danzig route: PRO. E122 79/12 (John Hubard leaving London on 16th July and 28th September, Thomas Oldehoff, 10th May and 12th August, Simon Merkenbeck and Jacob Timmermann, 10th September, and Tylman Blanck, 8th July); WAPG. 300.19/9 18v., 65r., 81v., 82r., 100v., 118r., 118v., 137v., 153.

<sup>24</sup> PRO. E122 79/12, 80/5.



## The Steelyard, Brabant, and England's cross-Channel trade

Regional representation within the non-transient sector of London's Steelyard community naturally lent itself to a degree of specialization, particularly in the import trade. Customs records for 1503 show that some Hanseatic grain was brought to London and, not surprisingly, virtually all of it belonged to Hamburg or Danzig men. Dinanter Johann Salmer remained the Steelyard's pre-eminent metalwares dealer, exporting tin and pewter and importing several hundred pounds sterling worth of copperware. A handful of Esterlings, Hermann Plough among them, also monopolized wax imports, which in most years during the first decade of the sixteenth century added between £8,000 and £9,000 to the value of the Hanseatic import trade.<sup>27</sup>

The advancing technology of warfare, coupled with naval and military expansion under the early Tudors, undoubtedly enhanced economic opportunities for the Hansards in London as well. Much of the royal arsenal was stocked with weapons and armour from continental Europe, procured through Italian agents. But as England developed its own weapons industry other purveyors of war materials, including Hansards from the Steelyard, found a ready market for their wares. Little is known of the royal armoury in the fifteenth century, but purchases for ordnance in the first few years of Henry VIII's reign give some indication of the Hansards' role, and there is no reason to believe their involvement was new or temporary. In all likelihood they assisted the development of Henry VII's arsenal as well. In October 1509 alone more than twenty tons of copper was purchased by the Crown for the gunfounders at the tower. More than half of it was sold to the new king by Esterling merchant Cort van

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<sup>27</sup> PRO. E122 79/12, 80/2,5, E356/24 47r.-50v.

Sight, and was brought to the Tower from the Steelyard in carts. Van Sight had been doing business in London as early as 1503, when he imported wax, linen and iron from the Baltic. It is not clear from the scant records that have survived just how regularly he sold copper to agents of the Crown. Within a few years, however, he was succeeded by a handful of Steelyard merchants who consistently supplied war materials to Henry VIII's armourers. One of them was Hermann Baghragh, who sold vast quantities of saltpetre for the making of gunpowder, and others included Egar van Kempen and Jeromyas Dolwyn, purveyors of bowstaves and copper.<sup>20</sup>

Cologne and Westphalian merchants- the Blitterswicks and Questenbercks, Johann van der Besen, and others active in the cross-Channel trade - concentrated, as they had throughout the fifteenth century, on a range of merchandise distinct from that in which most of the Baltic Hansards usually dealt. Many of their shipments of fustian, thread, silk, dyestuffs and steel came, like Salmer's "batteryware", either from the Lowlands or the lower Rhineland, or originated in the non-Hanseatic regions of western Europe. More often than not English and Lowland carriers were hired to haul these goods to London, and the Hansards shared cargo space with English and alien merchants.<sup>21</sup>

During the first decade of the sixteenth century in particular, the value of petty custom goods recorded in London increased dramatically. But with no extant particulars of customs except for the Exchequer years 1502-03 and 1505-06, fluctuations in the Hanseatic and

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<sup>20</sup> PRO. C1/308/71, E122 79/12, 80/2; Letters and Papers Foreign and Domestic of the Reign of Henry VIII. ed. J.S. Brewer, (London, 1920), I (1) 640, (2) 1164-65, 1229-32, 1552.

<sup>21</sup> PRO. E122 79/12, 80/2.



non-Hanseatic share of this trade can not be traced. Nor is it possible to determine if the increases were general or attributable to either the import or export sector. Moreover, although the Hansards had £15,793 worth of miscellaneous merchandise customed at London in 1502-03, and therefore accounted for one third of the non-denizen trade, the aggregate for this year is low and perhaps even untypical for the period. In 1509-10 it was £77,253, and already had topped £84,000 one in the interim. Particulars of accounts for 1505-06 are for eight months only, but show that the Hanseatic 3d. goods were valued at almost £18,000, or 30% of the total eventually enrolled for that year.<sup>30</sup>

The Hanseatic export trade from London was, like that of the denizen merchant community, keyed to English textile manufacturers. In this sector the Steelyard depended not only on suppliers in or near London, but also on a circle of business contacts in diverse regions of the country, from Hampshire to the Midlands. While there was still a traditional reliance on the weavers in Wiltshire, Gloucestershire and Somerset, Chancery proceedings from the early years of the sixteenth century also show that the Steelyard Hansards did business with a Wiltshire merchant and also with John Burnet, a "cotonman" from Manchester.<sup>31</sup>

Since there are no enrolled customs or particulars of accounts for the two consecutive years beginning Michaelmas 1494, it is especially difficult to assess the impact of the Anglo-Lowland trade dispute on commerce in the English capital. However, during 1493-94, the first year of the embargoes, cloth exports from London were in line with the previous annual totals. A significant,

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<sup>30</sup> PRO. E122 79/12, 80/2, E356/24 47r.-50v.; Appendix A.1.2.

<sup>31</sup> PRO. C1/277/20, C1/302/50, C1/316/58.

though not drastic decline in alien cloth exports was offset by a corresponding increase in the Hanseatic sector. Among non-Hanseatic aliens probably the hardest hit were the Brabantine merchants. Other foreign buyers, such as the Italians, likely were not so troubled by restrictions on direct shipments to the Lowlands, and they routinely came to Calais for English cloth anyway. The creation of the cloth staple and free market at Calais effectively eased the problems of English exporters as well, but again, without quantitative evidence, an accurate appraisal of the trade over the next two years is quite impossible.<sup>32</sup>

Beginning Michaelmas 1496 enrolled customs for London run consecutively, and reflect a steady upward trend in all sectors of London's cloth export trade with few setbacks. The greatest surge was in 1499-1500, after collection of the Andriesgulden was discontinued, and the most dramatic improvement was in the denizen sector. In 1496-97 denizen cloth exports totalled 18,310, but would average more than 23,000 units annually up to and including the Exchequer year 1509-10. For the Hansards the 1496-97 aggregate was 15,690 and the subsequent annual average 16,570 cloths. For non-Hanseatic aliens the total was 8,353, consistent with a yearly average of 7,960. The figures leave little doubt as to the most important participants in London's woollen export trade. From Michaelmas 1496 through Michaelmas 1510 denizen merchants accounted for 49% of London's cloth exports, and the Hansards 35%.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> E.M. Carus-Wilson and O. Coleman, op. cit., 111. P. Ramsey's assertion that the effects of the Interegnum were minimal, is based on his own estimated cloth export figures, which are open to criticism. There simply is no quantitative evidence for the two years in question. P. Ramsey, "Overseas Trade in the reign of Henry VII", ECHR., 2nd series VI (1953), 173-82.

<sup>33</sup> E.M. Carus-Wilson and O. Coleman, op. cit., 111-13.



On the other side of the Channel and along the North Sea coast an extensive shipping network linked the busy markets of Zealand, Brabant and Holland with the Hanseatic port of Hamburg, and the eastern extension of this transport network over Lübeck connected the Lowlands with the Baltic market. The Hamburg shippers themselves were the key participants on the Atlantic side, bringing bulk cargo like wood, ashes, copper, wax and Hamburg beer coastwise from the Elbe to Zealand. A large shipment brought from Hamburg in 1506 for merchants from Antwerp and Mecheln, consisted exclusively of osmund and Swedish copper. Still other Hamburg ships reached Zealand in ballast. Return cargoes were very diverse, but frequently included, salt, figs, fruit and wine.<sup>24</sup>

The merchants of Lübeck were, of course, significant players in the eastward extension of this trade, and they too had wide ranging business interests in Brabant. Like the Danzigers, they expanded their carriage trade southward to Iberia and hauled salt to Zealand from distant Lisbon. Wool, hides and salmon from Scotland also reached Lowland ports in Lübeck ships. From Antwerp, Bergen op Zoom and their outports the Lübeckers sent cloth, spices and mixed cargo northward for eventual distribution in the Baltic. Cloth was the essential commodity. Basing calculations on extant Lübeck port books, W. Stark has estimated that cloth shipments accounted for up to three quarters of the total value of Lübeck's export trade to Danzig in the early 1490s.<sup>25</sup> The Lübeckers functioned primarily as forwarding agents in this traffic to Prussia, and as Danzig's direct sea-borne links to England and the Lowlands carried more and

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<sup>24</sup> H.S. Unger, Iersekeroord. 482, 484, 491-93, 506-07, 516; R. Doehaerd, Etudes. III no. 3416.

<sup>25</sup> W. Stark, Lübeck und Danzig in der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts. (Weimar, 1973), 34-38.

more of the trade toward the end of the century, the services of the Lübeckers became less important. Perhaps too, the increased presence of merchants from England and Holland in the Baltic began to have an effect on the role of the Lübeck intermediaries. The English in particular had absolutely no established trade at Lübeck and therefore shipped directly to Danzig as well. But Lübeck still supplied many other important Baltic centres, like Riga, Stockholm and Reval, with a vast array of western cloth manufactured in Flanders, Westphalia, Brabant, Holland, Gelderland and England. So, although the merchants of Lübeck had largely relinquished their direct role in England by the end of the century, and the Brabant fairs were eclipsing Bruges as the chief market for regionally produced and imported fabrics, the traditional Lowlands/Hamburg/Lübeck link was still quite vital for the movement of cloth to the Baltic. The Lübeckers thus were able to preserve their intermediary function in this trade to the north and east. By the same token, much of what Lübeckers imported from Danzig and other Baltic centres was transferred to Hamburg and then re-shipped to English and Atlantic ports.<sup>24</sup>

The other essential route to the Baltic was the thriving Umlandfahrt. The established Holland, Zealand and Prussian captains were the predominant players, though from the early 1490s onward they were joined more and more often by Antwerp shippers taking imported fruit, wine, almonds, olives and "raisins de Corinthe" as well as cloth and salt directly to Danzig and Reval. Ships returned from the Baltic to the Zealand quays and ports in Holland laden with wax, copper and forest products. The Amsterdammers too, with their great salt ships plying the seas from La Rochelle to Riga, also freighted English

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 86-89, 219-24; R. Doehaerd, Etudes, II no. 1081-83; W.S. Unger, Iersekeroord, 504, 508, 511; F. Bruns, "Die Lübeckischen Pfundzollbücher von 1492-1496", HGBll., XI (1904-05), 109-31, XII (1907), 457-99, XIV (1908), 357-407.



and Flemish cloth, and carried an assortment of other cargoes for Hanseatic and Lowland merchants.<sup>27</sup>

The suspension of direct shipments to Burgundian ports in the mid-1490s and the subsequent controversy over payment of the florin of St. André in Brabant ultimately strengthened not only the coastal links, but also the alternative inland trade routes, and in particular those between Cologne and the North Sea and Zuider Zee ports that interconnected with the Baltic trade. Already, cargoes of Rhinish wine were shipped routinely to the Baltic via Dordrecht, Deventer, Kampen and Amsterdam.<sup>28</sup> It was the trade in the opposite direction, however, that took on an added importance. Cologners and Lübeckers were shipping English cloth from Calais to Kampen and Hamburg in 1495, but as late as 1499 the Cologners continued to bring English goods southward from Kampen through the territories of the bishop of Münster.<sup>29</sup> This illustrates, of course, that insofar as Cologne's lucrative English cloth trade was concerned the Brabant fair towns were largely transit points for consignments destined for Cologne and points east. Regardless of the importance of the Brabantine finishing industries, the market at Frankfurt was an integral part of Cologne's trade in English textiles. And quite the same was also true for the traffic through Brabant to England of shipments that originated outside Burgundian territory. In 1505 a cargo of metals, copperplate, wire, fustians and thread belonging to Cologne merchant Johann van der Besen arrived at Antwerp, and the owner

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<sup>27</sup> R. Doehaerd, Etudes. II no. 1104, 1341, 1663, 2061, III no. 3549, 3611; W.S. Unger, Iersekerroord. 506, 516-17, 521, 523-24.

<sup>28</sup> B. Kuske, Quellen. II no. 1485, 1526, 1574; G.S. Gramulla, Handelsbeziehungen Kölner Kaufleute zwischen 1500 und 1650. (Köln Wien, 1972), 11-13, 20.

<sup>29</sup> HUB. XI no. 1129.

specifically instructed that it not be unpacked there, since it was in transit to London.<sup>40</sup>

Regional English participation in the important Anglo-Brabantine trade varied. East Anglian merchants from Yarmouth and Lynn contributed, although neither port was a significant cloth exporting centre, and much of Lynn's cloth trade went to the Baltic anyway. But Norfolk merchants did exploit a modest agricultural resource base to diversify their export trade, and in Brabant they found a market for English cheese, beer, meat and grain. Cheap textiles, hides and butter also were shipped from the Norfolk ports and from Boston.<sup>41</sup> These commodities in turn attracted traders from across the Channel. In particular the shippers from Dordrecht were conspicuous at Lynn in the early sixteenth century. They brought everything from Rhinish wine, paving tiles and walnuts to dyestuffs and copper kettles. The vast majority of both inbound and outbound cargoes belonged to the Lowland merchants themselves. Of interest too, is that several of the Dordrecht ships that called at Lynn refreighted coal, which may well have come coastwise from the north. Lynn also served as a distribution centre linking England's coastal traffic with the cross-Channel trade.<sup>42</sup>

For the woollen exporters of Yorkshire, who shipped from Hull, Brabant was the primary foreign market. That enrolled figures for denizen cloth exports from Hull do not reflect a very significant slump during the Lowland embargoes of the mid-1490s suggests that the potentially negative impact on the export trade of the English merchants was effectively cushioned by the establishment of

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<sup>40</sup> R. Doehaerd, Etudes, II no. 1365, 1370.

<sup>41</sup> W.S. Unger, Iersekerroord, 505, 513-15.

<sup>42</sup> PRO, E122 98/16.



the cloth staple and free market at Calais. The same probably was true for the export trade of Newcastle, although the embargoes were aimed essentially at the cloth and wool trade in which that port played only a minor role. Newcastle shippers and merchants regularly brought lead, coal, and hides to Zealand and Brabant prior to 1494. The next year, however, when the Lowland traffic was disrupted and Calais was the principal link to the continental trade, more than twenty ships from Dieppe, Boulogne and Calais laded coal and lead at Newcastle.<sup>43</sup> After the Cold fair of 1493 virtually no English imports were recorded by the toll collectors in Zealand and Brabant until the autumn of 1495, when some cloth and wool again arrived via the Scheldt-Honte. Following the Intercursus the English trade was re-established quickly, despite the heavy tax on cloth, and the next year a half dozen carriers from Hull, London and Calais brought several hundred broadcloths, frieses and kerseys to Bergen op Zoom's Cold fair, and departed laden with mixed cargo. Thereafter, the Lowlands resumed their central place in the overseas trade of the northern English ports. For the Exchequer year 1498-99 denizen woollen exports from Hull totalled 963 broadcloths. Almost half of them (435 cloths) were carried to Veere in late September 1499 in five Hull ships. There is no reason to doubt that similar shipments were sent earlier in the year to the other major fairs. From Brabant and the quays in Zealand merchants from Hull, York and Newcastle sent a broad range of goods like steel, copperware, soap, madder, tar, sugar and paper back to England, using English and Lowland carriers.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Appendix A.1.1; PRO. E122 108/8.

<sup>44</sup> Appendix A.1.1; W.S. Unger, Iersekerroord. 481-94, 508, 511, 513-16, R. Doehaerd, Etudes. II no. 882.

Ultimately, though, the merchants of London and southern England and their interaction with traders in the Lowlands provided the essential connection in the cross-Channel trade. South Germans bought their wares, and so too did the Italians. They shipped English cheese and beer to Brabant, shopped the market in precious metals, and sold their cloth to Brabantine merchants and local finishers. The Brabanders, for their part, contracted English agents to deliver cloth at the fairs, brought it there themselves from London and Calais, bought and sold it at Bergen op Zoom or Antwerp, and sent consignments onward to Cologne. A diverse range of commodities could be offered in exchange, including copperware, perhaps worked locally, or metal ores brought from Saxony or points east. Antwerp merchants shipped copper and white metal from Bergen op Zoom to Calais, and exchanged "batteryware" (copperware) for English cloth at the Antwerp fairs.<sup>43</sup> From time to time, however, relations between the Brabanders and their English associates became less than amiable. Notwithstanding the common complaints about unfulfilled obligations and disagreements with tax and toll collectors on both sides of the Channel, there were instances when dislike and distrust of the English seems to have run rather deep. An example of this is the inquiry in 1501 into the demeanor of some Kentish merchants in Bergen op Zoom, who were accused not only of engaging in unfair and illegal business practices, but also of uttering seditious remarks against Archduke Philip. Their accusers were merchants from Antwerp.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> PRO, C1/272/54; R. Doehaerd, Etudes, II no. 1031, 1332, 1354, 1398, 1460, 1604, 1606, 1613, 1619, 1623, 1721, 1773, 1800-01, 1823, 1849, 1850, 1870, 1922, 1999, 2020, 2068, 2095, 2107; W.S. Unger, Iersekerord, 505, 514, 517, 527.

<sup>44</sup> ARA, CC. cartons, series I, 1-4, no. 109.



## Change and stability in the Hanse's English trade

A gradual restructuring of the Anglo-Hanseatic trade, precipitated initially by the war in the 1470s, and inextricably bound up with the subsequent ascendancy of the Brabantine entrepôts and the expansion of continental routes, was in a large measure completed during the 1492-1510 period. In terms of the value of goods exchanged there, Hull remained the most important single link in the Anglo-Hanseatic trade outside of London. And, even though the Estarlings were not well liked in northern England, it was the merchants of Danzig and Hamburg who sustained the Hanseatic trade there, exchanging bulk imports for English cloth and lead. At Newcastle lead also provided an export base to balance a modest Hanseatic import trade also controlled exclusively by the Esterlings. Further south, in Lincolnshire, the port of Boston was dropped entirely from the Hanseatic shipping routes, and the aggregate value of overseas trade there declined correspondingly. But the port of Lynn emerged as the focal point of both the import and export trade of Hansards in East Anglia. The Prussian staple was the crucial connection, and the involvement of denizen merchants in Lynn's Baltic trade was especially important. The other East Anglian ports - Ipswich and Colchester - ceased to be of any consequence insofar as Hanseatic woollen exports were concerned, but they continued to be utilized as points of entry for Hanseatic imports from the Baltic and elsewhere. Finally, the Hanseatic traffic in woollens from southern England was now concentrated entirely in the English capital, which also was the largest market by far for Hanseatic imports. The London Steelyard clearly relied on two principal overseas connections: the Prussian staple at Danzig and the great fairs in Brabant.

With the exception of the London comptoir, where merchants from diverse regions of the Hanse were active, the Hanseatic trade in England remained rather narrowly

confined to the Esterlings, and by the end of the fifteenth century more especially to the merchants and shippers of Hamburg and Danzig. Lübeckers and other Wendish merchants were still intermediaries in the traffic to and from the Baltic, and some of them owned shares in the ships trading to England. However, by their own admission, the Lübeckers had scarcely four or five men engaged in direct trade to England by the end of the century.<sup>47</sup> Their traditional commercial link with eastern England, the fish trade at Boston, had been all but abandoned by the late 1490s, as English fleets and those of Hamburg and Danzig took advantage of the Icelandic fisheries.

The withdrawal of the Bergen/Englandfahrer from Boston, and the elimination of the Hanseatic cloth export trade at Ipswich and Colchester streamlined the Hanseatic presence in England in terms of both the distribution network and the central participants. Hull in the north and London in the south provided the Hansards with most of their woollen exports, while Lynn and Newcastle had enough of a subsidiary trade in lead, hides, and other miscellanea to attract the Hansards as well. Only these four ports, together with Ipswich/Colchester, were of any importance to the Hanseatic import trade by the end of the fifteenth century. And, except for London, the import trade of the Hansards was by then synonymous with the bulk carriage trade of Hamburg and Danzig.

A number of circumstances contributed to the ascendancy of Hamburg's merchants and shippers in the Anglo-Hanseatic trade. To begin with they successfully competed with the English for a share of the Icelandic fish trade, and by integrating it with existing

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<sup>47</sup> Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik, ed. T. Hirsch and F.A. Vossberg, (Berlin, 1855), XI: "Ock werenn bynnen erer Stede [Lübeck] kume iiii eft v de der Engelschenn Reyse todoende hedden".



commercial links with the kingdom, largely eclipsed the role of the Bergenfahrer in England. The Wendish merchants kept the Bergen comptoir and maintained a steady though somewhat less secure trade in stockfish and herring to south German markets,<sup>40</sup> but Lübeckers showed little interest in bringing their fish to England. Aside from the Iceland/Hamburg/England connection, coastal traffic to and from the Lowlands also tied Hamburg shipping into the east-west commercial axis of the Anglo-Burgundian trade. Hamburg shippers could and did provide extra tonnage for the cross-Channel routes between Brabant and the London Steelyard. Moreover, Hamburg's trade and shipping along the Atlantic seaboard remained a vital extension of the vast Baltic network that supplied many essential bulk materials. Hamburg's fish and bulk carriage trade was augmented by grain exports and inexpensive textiles supplied by local and regional industries.<sup>41</sup> Cloth manufactured in Hamburg, Hannover, Osnabrück, Münster and Saltzwedel reached England via Brabant, but also was taken there directly in Hamburg ships. The diverting of Hanseatic exports of English cloth from London and Calais over Hamburg in the 1490s further strengthened Hamburg's direct commercial links with England in addition to the coastal trade and inland routes that connected the North Sea port with the lower Rhineland.

While the role of the east coast ports had been revised and the merchants of Hamburg had supplanted the Lübeckers in the English trade, the other two principal Hanseatic sub-groups remained firmly entrenched. Danzig skippers maintained their place as the foremost foreign

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<sup>40</sup> StA Lübeck Niederstadtsbuch Konzept 1506-1510 189r., 212v., 225r., 262v., 362v., 366r., 366v.

<sup>41</sup> Die Zolltarife der Stadt Hamburg, ed. E. Pitz, (Wiesbaden, 1961), 66, 75, 78; K. Friedland, "Hamburger Englandfahrer 1512-1557", Zeitschrift des Vereins für Hamburgische Geschichte, XLVI (1960), 9-10.

suppliers of bulk forest products to London and eastern England. Indeed, the basic orientation of the Danzigers' seaborne trade was now clearly a western one, as they too tapped the Icelandic fish reserves, shipped bulk freight extensively to England and the Lowlands, purchased cloth there, and stretched their commercial network along its Atlantic axis as far as Lisbon, where imported Baltic timber helped build the ships for Iberian maritime expansion.<sup>50</sup> The other group - the Cologners and their associates from the lower Rhineland and Westphalia - maintained an English trade concentrated almost totally at the London Steelyard, but tied to a broad network of resource bases and retail centres across western Europe. In this trade the Brabant fair towns and their outports, of considerable commercial importance in their own right, also served as vital though not exclusive transit points connecting Cologne's London trade with the eastern inland network that extended beyond Frankfurt.

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<sup>50</sup> HUB, XI no. 413-14; Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik, ed T. Hirsch and F.A. Vossberg, (Berlin, 1855), VIII.



## IX CONCLUSION

The institutional decay of the German Hanse in the late fifteenth century, as seen in context with the confederation's economic and political relationship with England, is closely tied to significant changes in the Anglo-Hanseatic trade. Commercial interests inevitably influenced political allegiances within the Hanseatic confederation, and by the first decade of the sixteenth century the trade network that linked the seaborne economies of the Hanseatic towns and England was appreciably different from the one that had existed three generations earlier.

Throughout the 1450-1510 period the merchants of Hamburg and the Baltic maintained a largely itinerant import trade in fish and bulk cargo in England's east coast towns, from Lynn to Newcastle. This trade underwent at least one important modification, however, for by the end of the century Lübeck's Bergenfahrer - once the most prominent Hanseatic fish importers, with a particularly significant trade at Boston - were scarcely a factor. They had been supplanted by the merchants and shippers of Hamburg and Danzig, who brought fish consignments from Iceland in addition to typical cargoes of flax, wood, iron, tar and linen, and now dominated the Hanseatic trade to eastern England.

In southern England the focus of a much more diversified Hanseatic trade was and ever had been the London Steelyard, where a more closely balanced traffic in woollen exports and various imports ranging from silk to dyestuffs and bulk raw materials was maintained by a resident Hanseatic community. Within the Steelyard fellowship two principal sub-groups - the Esterlings from Hamburg and the Baltic, and the Cologners, Westphalians and merchants from the lower Rhineland - depended on two essential overseas connections: the northern trade to and from Danzig and Hamburg, and the cross-Channel traffic to

and from the Lowlands. Both of these trade links were interconnected in turn with the north-south commercial axis of the Atlantic network, which by the end of the fifteenth century extended from the northernmost Hanseatic ports to Lisbon. The Anglo-Hanseatic War (1469-1474) and its aftermath saw the Hanseatic woollen trade in southern England, like the English cloth export trade as a whole, become concentrated almost exclusively in London and highly dependent on the fair towns of Brabant for continental distribution. By the 1490s the once thriving outports for the Steelyard - Ipswich and Colchester - would cease to be of any relevance in this sector of the Hanseatic trade.

In fact, the suspension of Anglo-Baltic commerce and the Hanseatic embargo on English cloth during the war years set in motion a number of crucial changes within the European trade structure. The trade of denizen cloth exporters, from both northern and southern England, became almost wholly dependent on the Lowland market, and the Baltic Hansards were obliged to redirect much of their seaborne traffic there as well. This not only benefited the Lowland cloth exporters, who, in the absence of English competition in the northern Hanseatic sphere, had the Baltic market much to themselves for a time, but also contributed to the ascendancy of the Brabantine entrepôts and their outports in Zealand. With access to alternative markets restricted, a continental gateway for the English woollen trade became all the more essential for English exporters and the merchants of Cologne. Protectionist statutes in Flanders were offset by comparatively liberal trade policies at Antwerp and Bergen op Zoom, making Brabant the logical conduit. So, in addition to the political turmoil in Flanders that weakened the trade of Bruges after the death of Duke Charles, the strengthening of the London/Zeland/Brabant corridor from 1469 through 1474 coupled with the increased dependence of the Baltic Hansards on the Zealand quays, also helped pave the way for the subsequent



expansion of the Brabantine market. The Cologners, moreover, not only preserved their trade between the Steel-yard and Brabant in the early 1470s, they of necessity expanded lucrative commercial links from there eastward to non-Hanseatic regions. Thenceforth, the extension of the east-west overland network through Silesia challenged the protectionist policies of towns in Prussia and Poland and their established control of trade to the west over Danzig.

Economic developments to some degree shaped political attitudes. Likewise, key adjustments in the commercial network reflect many of the trends and crises in Anglo-Hanseatic diplomacy. An obvious prelude to the diminished presence of the Bergenfahrer in England, for instance, was the severe and prolonged breach in political relations between Lübeck and England following the attacks on the Wendish salt ships in 1449 and 1458. The Anglo-Hanseatic War of the early 1470s then eliminated the Lübeckers entirely from the English trade for the better part of half a decade, and their eventual voluntary departure was assured in the years that followed as fleets from England, Danzig and Hamburg successfully exploited the Icelandic fisheries and lessened English dependence on the Bergen comptoir. The main residual effect was that Lübeck, the diplomatic head of the Hanseatic community, was left with no significant trading interests in the English kingdom. This situation ultimately contributed to political polarization within the Hanse, for unlike Lübeck's now nominal trade with England, that of Cologne was of such integral importance that the town willingly forfeited membership of the Hanse in order to preserve it when Anglo-Hanseatic relations reached their lowest ebb in 1468. Notwithstanding the ongoing controversy regarding the Bruges comptoir, then, the most serious and obtrusive rift between the Hanseatic leadership and any of the principal member towns in the late medieval period stemmed directly from Anglo-Hanseatic relations between 1450 and 1468.

Cologne's temporary defection from the Hanse together with the range of other responses to England's challenge clearly delineated a number of special interest groups within the Hanseatic confederation, and thus exemplified the disunity that weakened the Hanse as a political entity. Yet, although it contributed to a gradual institutional paralysis, particularism within the Hanse was not a new development in the late fifteenth century, and by the same token Hanseatic political solidarity or lack of it was not a barometer for the mercantile prosperity of individual member towns. That now depended very much on adaptability to the evolving trade structure. The modifications in the northern European commercial network, triggered in part by Anglo-Hanseatic crises, certainly reinforced Cologne's integral position along the east-west axis of the burgeoning cloth trade from London and the Lowlands. And, in the face of competition from the extended overland routes, the Danzigers energetically expanded their seaborne trade to western markets. In the final quarter of the century they too gained a foothold in the Icelandic fisheries, extended their long-distance carriage trade to Iberia, played an increasingly important role at the Steelyard, and dominated the non-denizen overseas trade of eastern England. Hamburg also integrated her Baltic connections and the Icelandic fish trade with English and Lowland markets, and provided shipping for the coastal and Channel traffic. Later in the century the Anglo-Lowland trade wars undoubtedly enhanced Hamburg's prospects for mercantile growth as well, when much of the Hanse's English cloth trade had to be redirected there.

The Anglo-Hanseatic talks at Antwerp in 1491, precipitated by a steady worsening of relations between the two parties, further accentuated diverse interests within the Hanse. Lübeck was represented as the nominal head of the Hanseatic delegation, and the Cologners were intensely involved, but the real negotiations were between the English envoys and the Danzigers, and the bargaining



issues were recognition of Hanseatic privileges in England - a joint concern of Danzig, Hamburg, and Cologne, but hardly for Lübeck and the distant Livonian towns - and English status at the Prussian staple.

Until the end of the fifteenth century English access to the Baltic market, and more specifically to the Danzig staple was a predominant issue in Anglo-Hanseatic affairs. Yet, from mid-century to 1468 there was an intermittent English trade to Danzig, albeit one plagued by England's diplomatic quarrels with Lübeck and Denmark and war in the eastern Baltic. And while the Anglo-Hanseatic War banished the English entirely in the early 1470s, the Treaty of Utrecht subsequently reopened the region to them. However, during the conflict the merchant adventurers became exceedingly dependent on the trade to Brabant, and except for the merchants of Lynn, who did sustain commercial links with Danzig, the English merchant community as a whole remained preoccupied with the Lowland trade until new crises arose in the late 1480s and early 1490s. Even then the English were slow to respond to the Baltic alternative, despite the explicit confirmation of their status in 1491, which placed them on an equal footing at Danzig with all other non-Hansards. By and large their mercantile achievements were not equal to those of the government on the Anglo-Hanseatic diplomatic front, and indeed their inability to penetrate alternative markets during the Interegnum muted the effectiveness of royal policy vis à vis the Lowland trade by forcing Henry VII to open Calais as a free market and declare it the staple for English cloth in order to preserve England's woollen export trade. Only in the early sixteenth century was there a discernible upturn in English traffic to and from the Baltic.

In England the overall importance of the Hansards is mirrored in the impact of disruptions in the Anglo-Hanseatic trade on various regional economies. In

most years for which evidence survives, Hansards in the east coast ports of Lynn, Hull and probably Newcastle accounted for one third to 75% of the trade in miscellaneous goods other than cloth and wool, and were the only foreigners of any significance in the woollen export trade. Their absence during the war years 1469-1474 resulted in a precipitous decline in the overseas trade of the east coast towns, and again in 1490, when antipathy at Hull was such that the Hansards were reluctant to go there, the foreign overseas trade of the port was virtually shut down. Also, as the Bergenfahrer gradually abandoned the port of Boston during the waning years of the century that port's seaborne trade, already in decline since the 1450s, faded dramatically. Similarly, when the Steelyard Hansards did not resume their cloth export trade from Ipswich/Colchester after the 1470s there was an appreciable decline there as well. In London, woollen exports by the free Cologners during the Anglo-Hanseatic War amounted to only about half of the usual Hanseatic aggregate in any one year. However, both before and after the conflict Hanseatic merchants accounted for one third of the cloth export trade and at least that much of the foreign import trade, and remained an essential part of London's overseas commerce.



## APPENDICES

The following series of appendices, consisting of statistical compilations, composites, and transcripts of notarial records, illustrates various facets of Anglo-Hanseatic trade during the second half of the fifteenth century. Appendix A.1.1 utilizes cloth export totals published in E.M. Carus-Wilson and O. Coleman, England's Export Trade 1275-1547. (Oxford, 1963), and Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century. ed. E. Power and M.M. Postan, (London, 1933), and petty custom statistics up to 1482 in Studies. plus figures for subsequent years gleaned from PRO. E356 KR. customs enrolments. Further breakdowns of the Hanseatic trade have been calculated from the surviving particulars of accounts of the cloth and petty custom for various individual ports, specifically: Boston, PRO. E122 9/53, 54, 56, 59, 65, 68; 10/1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 22, 24, 25, 26; 11/2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 14, 17, 18, 20; Hull, PRO. E122 61/71, 75; 62/1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11; 63/1, 2, 8, 13; Ipswich, PRO. E122 52/42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 52, 54, 55, 58; 53/3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 17, 18; Lynn, PRO. E122 96/37, 40, 41; 97/1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 17, 18; 98/1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16; Newcastle, PRO. E122 107/53, 61; 108/1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12. Appendix A.1.2 has been compiled from PRO. E122 78/9, 80/2 and E356/21 10r.-11v., E356/22 34r.-38r. Hanseatic trade balances computed for Appendix A.1.3 are based on actual values for miscellaneous goods given in the accounts and an estimated value for broadcloths outlined in Chapter IV. The archival sources for the remaining Appendices A.1.4 through A.5.5 are noted with the corresponding transcripts.

A.1.1	<u>BOSTON</u>	Broadcloths exported				Value in £ of Alien Mdse. paying the Petty Custom	
		<sup>1</sup> Overlap <sup>2</sup> Minumum					
	Date	Deniz.	Hanse	Alien	Total	Total	Hanse
	01.09.1460/29.09.1461	188	346	nil	534	563	532
	29.09.1461/29.09.1462	135	636	nil	771	1042	
	29.09.1462/20.07.1463	189	nil	nil	189	1593	
	20.07.1463/25.02.1465	278	279	9	566	1002	519 <sup>2</sup>
	25.02.1465/29.09.1465	54	450	4	508	281	4 <sup>2</sup>
	29.09.1465/25.03.1467	387	95	144	626	[1340]	713 <sup>2</sup>
	25.03.1467/06.03.1468	185	42	1	228	452	328
	06.03.1468/25.12.1468	576	56	1	633	228	
	25.12.1468/29.09.1469	397	5	166	568	313	nil
	29.09.1469/13.11.1470 <sup>1</sup>	623	nil	4	627	100	nil
	26.10.1470/29.09.1471	273	nil	30	303	166	nil
	29.09.1471/08.10.1472	372	nil	43	415	160	nil
	08.10.1472/08.10.1473	479	nil	149	628	237	nil
	08.10.1473/02.11.1474	337	nil	206	543	444	nil
	02.11.1474/29.09.1475	169	31	170	370	553	1
	29.09.1475/29.09.1476	12	283	4	299	998	436
	29.09.1476/29.09.1477	84	nil	6	90	543	nil
	29.09.1477/29.09.1478	107	548	6	661	1100	682
	29.09.1478/29.09.1479	204	195	21	420	596	377
	29.09.1479/29.09.1480	68	265	nil	333	439	314
	29.09.1480/29.09.1481	41	241	nil	282	535	417
	29.09.1481/29.09.1482	152	62	7	221	948	815
	29.09.1482/29.09.1483	91	214	11	316	792	546
	29.09.1483/29.09.1484	66	152	nil	218	353	210
	29.09.1484/29.09.1485	54	283	nil	337	485	458
	29.09.1485/29.09.1486	51	nil	nil	51	76	nil
	29.09.1486/29.09.1487	99	nil	nil	99	62	nil
	29.09.1487/29.09.1488	88	67	nil	155	309	263
	29.09.1488/29.09.1489	30	32	nil	62	394	394
	29.09.1489/29.09.1490	89	31	nil	120	1243	1177
	29.09.1490/29.09.1491	50	nil	nil	50	41	nil
	29.09.1491/29.09.1492	9	146	nil	155	1574	1512
	29.09.1492/29.09.1493	38	nil	nil	38	35	nil
	29.09.1493/29.09.1494	53	nil	nil	53	51	42
	29.09.1494/29.09.1495	81	5	nil	86	50	
	29.09.1495/29.09.1496	50	nil	nil	50	42	nil
	29.09.1496/29.09.1497	22	15	18	55	270	
	29.09.1497/29.09.1498	71	nil	nil	71	160	
	29.09.1498/29.09.1499	42	1	nil	43	62	27
	29.09.1499/29.09.1500	56	7	8	71	113	94
	29.09.1500/29.09.1501	123	nil	7	130	131	nil
	29.09.1501/29.09.1502	103	6	7	116	325	
	29.09.1502/29.09.1503	54	nil	7	61	432	nil
	29.09.1503/29.09.1504	6	nil	11	17	520	
	29.09.1504/29.09.1505	11	nil	6	17	161	nil
	29.09.1505/29.09.1506	9	nil	29	38	158	nil
	29.09.1506/29.09.1507	25	nil	59	84	312	nil
	29.09.1507/29.09.1508	28	nil	24	52	315	nil
	29.09.1508/29.09.1509	5	nil	2	7	147	nil
	29.09.1509/29.09.1510	11	nil	4	15	250	nil



A.1.1 HULL Broadcloths  
exported Value in £ of  
Alien Mdse.  
<sup>1</sup> Gap <sup>2</sup> Minimum  
<sup>3</sup> Cologne Merchants paying the  
Petty Custom

Date	Deniz.	Hanse	Alien	Total	Total	Hanse
11.04.1461/29.09.1461	629	115	16	760	716	171
29.09.1461/29.09.1462	2065	101	nil	2166	997	
29.09.1462/06.10.1463	1616	252	nil	1868	1990	
06.10.1463/29.09.1464	928	507	1	1436	1102	
29.09.1464/29.09.1465	730	93	75	898	1027	458
29.09.1465/29.09.1466	125	134	5	264	1365	
29.09.1466/29.09.1467	326	31	16	373	1026	253
29.09.1467/29.09.1468	1449	189	25	1663	1415	272 <sup>2</sup>
29.09.1468/29.09.1469	738	36	3	777	651	
29.09.1469/05.11.1470	480	nil	nil	480	50	nil
05.11.1470/29.09.1471	577	nil	nil	577	431	43 <sup>3</sup>
29.09.1471/29.09.1472	839	nil	1	840	606	nil
29.09.1472/29.09.1473	699	nil	91	790	1357	nil
29.09.1473/22.08.1474	699	nil	16	715	1353	
22.08.1474/08.08.1475	784	444	22	1250	2674	1115
08.08.1475/29.09.1476	2074	438	102	2614	2578	1183
29.09.1476/29.09.1477	1938	435	79	2452	2431	1532
29.09.1477/29.09.1478	2623	208	22	2853	1026	397
29.09.1478/29.09.1479	1872	232	44	2148	2396	1671
29.09.1479/29.09.1480	2354	791	67	3212	2228	1610
29.09.1480/29.09.1481	2724	915	70	3709	3055	2485
29.09.1481/29.09.1482	2069	690	14	2773	4256	3907
29.09.1482/29.09.1483	1397	387	28	1812	2725	2036
29.09.1483/29.09.1484	1042	334	45	1421	2697	1902
29.09.1484/22.08.1485 <sup>1</sup>	620	290	90	1000	2935	2158
22.08.1485/29.09.1486	1162	337	1	1500	2194	1693
29.09.1486/29.09.1487	305	68	20	393	2847	2497
29.09.1487/29.09.1488	342	116	16	474	557	319
29.09.1488/29.09.1489	780	43	1	824	970	
29.09.1489/29.09.1490	888	105	11	1004	1495	*
29.09.1490/29.09.1491	1549	nil	3	1552	321	
29.09.1491/29.09.1492	1212	148	82	1442	2146	
29.09.1492/29.09.1493	1249	619	10	1878	3184	3037
29.09.1493/29.09.1494	1368	444	37	1849	4288	3246
29.09.1494/29.09.1495	1202	548	13	1763	4994	
29.09.1495/29.09.1496	1286	392	52	1730	4992	3671
29.09.1496/29.09.1497	1578	926	85	2589	5827	
29.09.1497/29.09.1498	1269	676	69	2014	5812	2716 <sup>2</sup>
29.09.1498/29.09.1499	963	547	102	1612	6775	3673
29.09.1499/29.09.1500	1604	642	71	2317	4152	
29.09.1500/29.09.1501	2457	415	107	2979	4955	
29.09.1501/29.09.1502	2511	782	104	3397	8518	
29.09.1502/29.09.1503	2160	1024	173	3357	7161	4805
29.09.1503/29.09.1504	3023	880	48	3951	7206	
29.09.1504/29.09.1505	1627	438	228	2293	5640	
29.09.1505/29.09.1506	1101	353	35	1489	4266	
29.09.1506/29.09.1507	1611	630	83	2324	8558	
29.09.1507/29.09.1508	1383	580	84	2047	7086	
29.09.1508/29.09.1509	1193	648	47	1888	5217	
29.09.1509/29.09.1510	758	77	47	[1882]	[1048]	

\* Particulars of account for 1489-90 (PRO. E122 63/8) are too damaged to be of use for quantitative analysis, but do show that at least five Danzig ships called at Hull.

A.1.1	IPSWICH	Broadcloths exported				Value in £ of Alien Mdse. paying the Petty Custom	
	<sup>1</sup> Gap <sup>2</sup> Minimum <sup>3</sup> Cologne Merchants						
	Date	Deniz.	Hanse	Alien	Total	Total	Hanse
	29.09.1460/29.09.1461	313	1844	2	2149	3934	
	29.09.1461/16.10.1462	313	1373	1	1687	2443	730 <sup>2</sup>
	16.10.1462/10.07.1463	106	1022	51	1179	1184	
	10.07.1463/31.08.1464	118	501	31	650	1738	
	31.08.1464/29.09.1465	63	1167	82	1312	1561	
	29.09.1465/29.09.1466	159	4525	43	4727	3148	2706
	29.09.1466/29.09.1467	520	606	115	1241	1494	
	29.09.1467/29.09.1468	460	852	63	1375	1300	
	29.09.1468/02.04.1469 <sup>1</sup>	476	132 <sup>3</sup>	16	624	513	
	01.09.1469/09.10.1470	388	nil	nil	388	238	80 <sup>3,2</sup>
	09.10.1470/30.09.1471	595	184 <sup>3</sup>	20	799	352	166 <sup>3,2</sup>
	30.09.1471/29.09.1472	287	242 <sup>3</sup>	18	547	775	
	29.09.1472/29.09.1473	328	50 <sup>3</sup>	35	413	668	
	29.09.1473/29.09.1474	337	nil	1	338	491	
	29.09.1474/08.11.1475	115	349	5	469	1968	1469
	08.11.1475/08.11.1476	460	851	30	1341	786	496
	08.11.1476/08.11.1477	648	40	8	696	632	301
	08.11.1477/08.11.1478	355	158	6	519	249	55
	08.11.1478/14.10.1479	458	155	2	615	339	255
	14.10.1479/14.10.1480	532	194	6	732	497	251
	14.10.1480/29.09.1481	515	146	16	677	2089	1148
	29.09.1481/29.09.1482	391	228	13	632	778	317
	29.09.1482/29.09.1483	124	35	2	161	515	336
	29.09.1483/29.09.1484	266	nil	nil	266	92	nil
	29.09.1484/22.08.1485 <sup>1</sup>	455	273	nil	728	873	642
	29.09.1485/29.09.1486	401	7	1	409	367	367
	29.09.1486/29.09.1487	411	348	6	765	1443	1129
	29.09.1487/29.09.1488	233	736	2	971	778	501 <sup>2</sup>
	29.09.1488/29.09.1489	140	320	3	463	608	
	29.09.1489/29.09.1490	235	504	6	745	1637	
	29.09.1490/29.09.1491	388	721	17	1126	842	
	29.09.1491/29.09.1492	354	209	nil	563	1008	603
	29.09.1492/29.09.1493	262	nil	13	275	526	
	29.09.1493/29.09.1494	355	31	21	407	674	
	29.09.1494/29.09.1495	617	nil	14	631	309	
	29.09.1495/29.09.1496	493	nil	27	520	306	69
	29.09.1496/29.09.1497	504	nil	7	511	313	
	29.09.1497/29.09.1498	515	nil	28	543	1220	509
	29.09.1498/29.09.1499	911	79	57	1047	1013	
	29.09.1499/29.09.1500	1002	nil	83	1085	855	nil
	29.09.1500/29.09.1501	1258	nil	85	1343	1012	72
	29.09.1501/29.09.1502	1730	nil	79	1809	915	nil
	29.09.1502/29.09.1503	1204	5	35	1244	787	
	29.09.1503/29.09.1504	1307	nil	26	1333	862	
	29.09.1504/29.09.1505	841	2	63	906	814	
	29.09.1505/29.09.1506	1401	nil	95	1496	387	47 <sup>2</sup>
	29.09.1506/29.09.1507	1447	nil	64	1511	621	
	29.09.1507/29.09.1508	2313	nil	142	2455	2246	nil
	29.09.1508/29.09.1509	2535	1	128	2664	1760	nil
	29.09.1509/29.09.1510	2263	nil	200	2463	2000	16

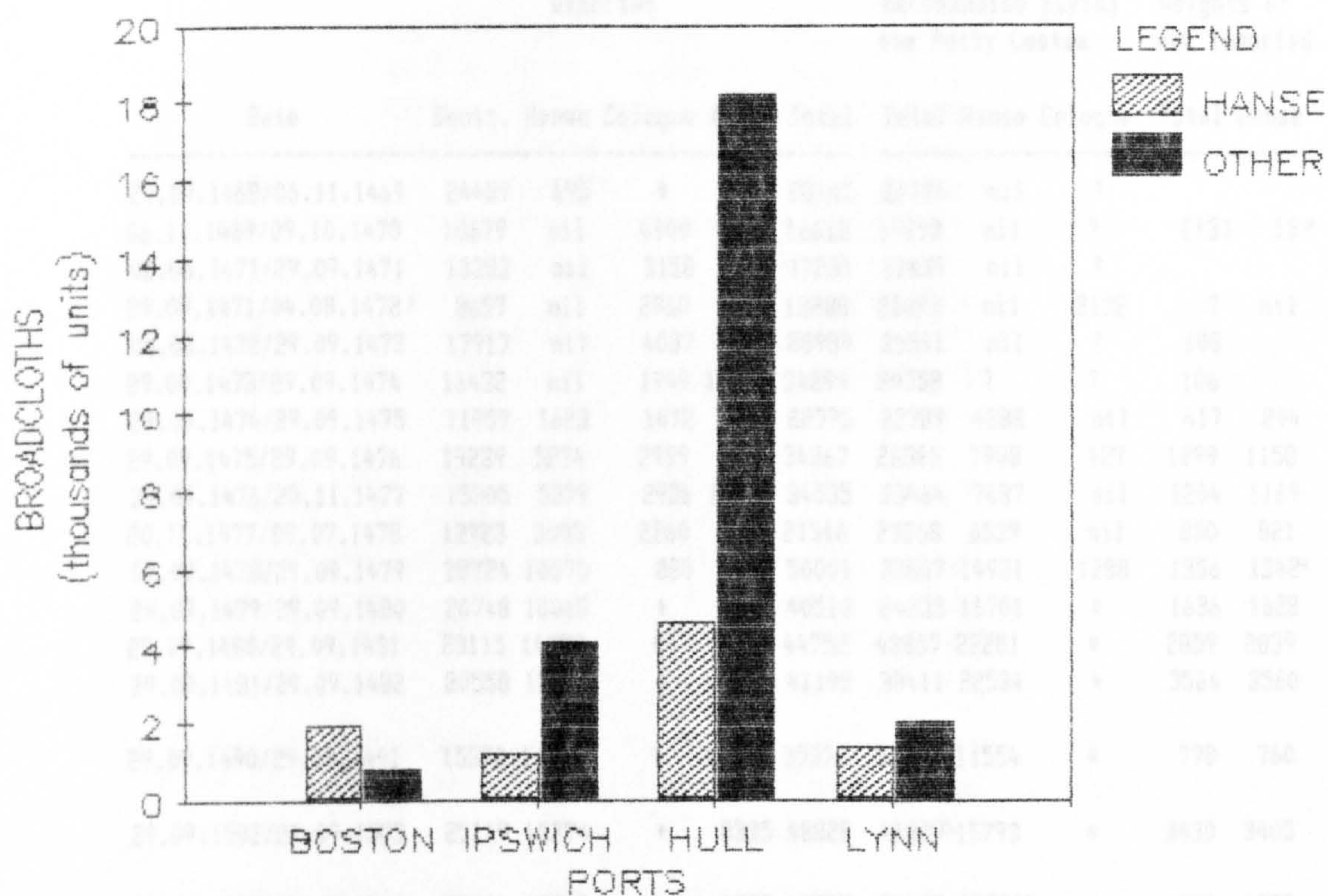


A.1.1	LYNN	Broadcloths exported				Value in £ of Alien Mdse. paying the Petty Custom	
	<sup>1</sup> Gap <sup>2</sup> Minimum						
	Date	Deniz.	Hanse	Alien	Total	Total	Hanse
06.08.1460/24.11.1461		330	47	nil	377	1026	707 <sup>2</sup>
24.11.1461/29.08.1462		180	31	nil	211	467	
29.08.1462/12.07.1463		297	27	nil	324	296	
12.07.1463/19.11.1464		561	72	nil	633	954	
19.11.1464/19.11.1465		125	502	nil	627	742	648
19.11.1465/02.11.1466		277	150	nil	427	979	651 <sup>2</sup>
02.11.1466/02.11.1467		217	145	nil	362	748	386
02.11.1467/02.11.1468		911	52	nil	963	497	309
02.11.1468/17.09.1469		63	nil	nil	63	508	nil
17.09.1469/16.05.1470		19	nil	nil	19	260	nil
03.11.1470/13.11.1471 <sup>1</sup>		29	nil	nil	29	214	nil
13.11.1471/13.11.1472		56	nil	nil	56	271	nil
13.11.1472/13.11.1473		92	nil	nil	92	325	nil
13.11.1473/13.11.1474		6	nil	nil	6	646	
13.11.1474/13.11.1475		25	270	1	296	929	136
13.11.1475/13.11.1476		108	308	24	430	731	528
13.11.1476/13.11.1477		250	84	1	335	615	177
13.11.1477/13.11.1478		432	129	nil	561	821	477
13.11.1478/13.11.1479		471	187	nil	658	556	237
13.11.1479/13.11.1480		132	183	1	316	588	411
13.11.1480/29.09.1481		182	184	35	401	997	294
29.09.1481/29.09.1482		217	181	nil	398	1247	895
29.09.1482/29.09.1483		129	79	4	212	520	317
29.09.1483/29.09.1484		68	89	nil	157	613	424
29.09.1484/22.08.1485 <sup>1</sup>		68	145	nil	213	775	662
17.09.1485/29.09.1486		63	145	nil	208	382	244
29.09.1486/29.09.1487		81	46	3	130	444	256
29.09.1487/29.09.1488		nil	280	12	292	1196	1032
29.09.1488/29.09.1489		191	777	nil	968	2202	2006
29.09.1489/29.09.1490		85	32	1	118	799	466
29.09.1490/29.09.1491		103	30	4	137	866	582 <sup>2</sup>
29.09.1491/29.09.1492		89	338	nil	427	1371	1226
29.09.1492/29.09.1493		55	480	nil	535	1371	
29.09.1493/29.09.1494		156	17	nil	173	327	308
29.09.1494/29.09.1495		69	47	nil	116	498	252
29.09.1495/29.09.1496		129	74	nil	203	922	580
29.09.1496/29.09.1497		10	6	nil	16	328	
29.09.1497/29.09.1498		173	101	13	287	1133	
29.09.1498/29.09.1499		229	52	3	284	913	553
29.09.1499/29.09.1500		152	315	6	473	479	
29.09.1500/29.09.1501		241	104	12	357	706	
29.09.1501/29.09.1502		345	98	1	444	[170]	
29.09.1502/29.09.1503		479	73	1	553	938	
29.09.1503/29.09.1504		444	123	5	572	886	446
29.09.1504/29.09.1505		915	84	10	1009	410	113
29.09.1505/29.09.1506		737	71	2	810	442	
29.09.1506/29.09.1507		1121	80	9	1210	618	289
29.09.1507/29.09.1508		823	110	11	944	971	
29.09.1508/21.04.1509 <sup>1</sup>		706	nil	9	715	[199]	
21.11.1509/29.09.1510		465	nil	5	470	670	

A.1.1 <u>NEWCASTLE</u>		Broadcloths exported				Value in £ of Alien Mdse. paying the Petty Custom	
<sup>1</sup> Gap							
* No account							
Date	Deniz.	Hanse	Alien	Total	Total	Hanse	
24.12.1459/20.09.1460 <sup>1</sup>	nil	nil	nil	nil	27		
10.05.1461/18.02.1462	11	nil	nil	11	85		
18.02.1462/01.08.1463	nil	nil	6	nil	416		
01.08.1463/03.05.1464	nil	nil	nil	nil	111		
03.05.1464/04.03.1465	2	nil	nil	2	342		
04.03.1465/11.04.1466 <sup>1</sup>	16	nil	12	28	590		
18.03.1467/28.03.1468 <sup>1</sup>	11	nil	nil	11	521		
19.12.1468/03.09.1469 <sup>1</sup>	15	nil	nil	15	239		
03.09.1469/30.03.1476*							
30.03.1476/17.06.1476	nil	nil	nil	nil	24		
17.06.1476/01.06.1477	nil	2	nil	2	89		
01.06.1477/01.06.1478 <sup>1</sup>	28	8	nil	36	110	85	
01.11.1478/29.09.1480	3	nil	nil	3	97		
29.09.1480/16.11.1486*							
16.11.1486/28.10.1487	nil	nil	nil	nil			
28.10.1487/28.10.1488	110	1	14	125	181	93	
28.10.1488/29.09.1489	nil	9	4	13	550	473	
29.09.1489/29.09.1490	7	1	17	25	315	9	
29.09.1490/29.09.1491	22	nil	7	29	120	65	
29.09.1491/12.03.1494*							
12.03.1494/02.12.1495	52	2	7	61	206	78	
02.12.1495/29.09.1496	3	12	nil	15	343	280	
29.09.1496/29.09.1497	8	nil	1	9	217		
29.09.1497/29.09.1498	1	nil	2	3	294	54	
29.09.1498/29.09.1499	6	nil	5	11	437	153	
29.09.1499/29.09.1500	29	12	4	45	447	229	
29.09.1500/29.09.1501	40	1	5	46	425	121	
29.09.1501/29.09.1502	22	nil	3	25	254	55	
29.09.1502/29.09.1503	51	nil	6	57	188		
29.09.1503/29.09.1504	43	nil	4	47	437		
29.09.1504/29.09.1505 <sup>1</sup>	30	nil	nil	30	658		
29.09.1505/29.09.1506	5	5	2	12	866	396	
29.09.1506/29.09.1507	13	nil	nil	13	1102		
29.09.1507/29.09.1508	36	nil	7	43	666	25	
29.09.1508/29.09.1509	13	nil	3	16	601		
29.09.1509/29.09.1510	8	nil	5	13	492		

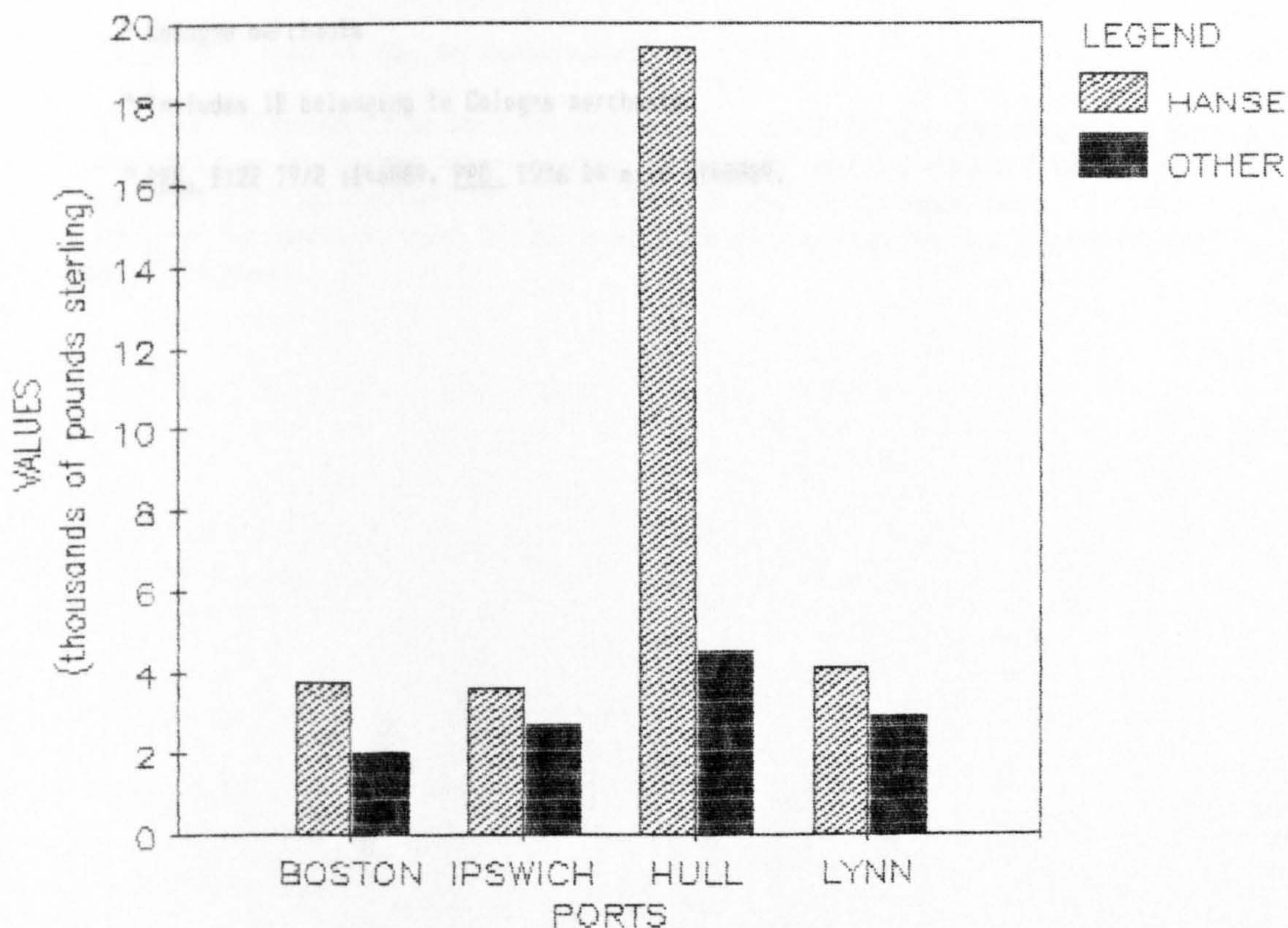


# CLOTH EXPORTS 1476 - 1486



A.1.1

# PETTY CUSTOM MERCHANDISE 1476 - 1486





A.1.2	<u>LONDON</u>	Broadcloths exported				Value in £ of Alien Merchandise paying the Petty Custom			Hundred- weights of wax imported		
Date		Deniz.	Hanse	Cologne	Alien	Total	Total	Hanse	Cologne	Total	Hanse
29.09.1468/06.11.1469		24489	695	*	2961	28145	26196	nil	?		
06.11.1469/09.10.1470		10679	nil	4900	1033	16612	19293	nil	?	[13]	13 <sup>a</sup>
06.06.1471/29.09.1471		13383	nil	3158	690	17231	11639	nil	?		
29.09.1471/04.08.1472 <sup>1</sup>		8657	nil	2960	1671	13288	28825	nil	2132	7	nil
04.08.1472/29.09.1473		17917	nil	4037	7035	28989	35591	nil	?	108	
29.09.1473/29.09.1474		16432	nil	1949	15913	34294	20758	?	?	106	
29.09.1474/29.09.1475		11959	1623	1472	7341	22395	22789	4288	nil	417	294
29.09.1475/29.09.1476		19239	5274	2999	6855	34367	26385	7908	127	1299	1158
29.09.1476/20.11.1477		15305	5379	2926	10925	34535	33464	7487	nil	1204	1169
20.11.1477/09.07.1478		12923	3003	2260	3330	21516	23268	6539	nil	850	821
09.07.1478/29.09.1479		28724	10570	880	9827	50001	33867	14921	1288	1356	1342 <sup>a</sup>
29.09.1479/29.09.1480		20748	10068	*	9694	40510	24235	16701	*	1636	1628
29.09.1480/29.09.1481		23115	14079	*	7558	44752	43857	22281	*	2859	2839
29.09.1481/29.09.1482		20558	13386	*	7254	41198	38411	22534	*	3564	3560
29.09.1490/29.09.1491		15370	10074	*	11926	37370	37933	11554	*	778	760
29.09.1502/29.09.1503		25119	15374	*	8335	48828	46889 <sup>5</sup>	15793	*	3430	3405
29.09.1505/29.09.1506		23314	15745	*	6539	45598	58177	17896 <sup>2</sup>	*	4278	4275

\*Included in Hanse total.

<sup>1</sup> Gap

<sup>2</sup> Minimum

<sup>3</sup> Cologne merchants

<sup>4</sup> Includes 12 belonging to Cologne merchants.

<sup>5</sup> PRO. E122 79/2 :£46889, PRO. E356 24 m.48 :£48889.



A.1.3 HANSEATIC TRADE BALANCES 1450-1468

Port and Date	Est. val. in £ of cloth exports <sup>1</sup>	Val. in £ of Petty Custom exports	Total Value in £ of exports	Total Value in £ of imports	Val. in £ of Petty Custom imports	Val. in £ of wax imports <sup>2</sup>	Ratio of export to import values
<u>BOSTON</u>							
15.12.1459/29.09.1461	1721	46*	1767*	1583*	1583*		1.1 : 1
25.02.1465/25.03.1467	725	nil	725*	717*	717*		1 : 1
25.03.1467/25.12.1468	130	4	134	324	324		1 : 2.4
<u>HULL</u>							
02.10.1452/29.09.1453	527	nil	527*	364*	364*		1.4 : 1
11.04.1461/29.09.1461	153	nil	153	171	171		1 : 1.1
29.09.1464/29.09.1465	124	4	128	454	454		1 : 3.5
29.09.1466/29.09.1467	41	44	85	209	209		1 : 2.5
29.09.1467/29.09.1468	251		251*	272*	272*		1 : 1.1
<u>IPSWICH</u>							
29.09.1458/29.09.1459	1645	31	1676	1006	999	7	1.7 : 1
29.09.1465/29.09.1466	6018	172	6190	2592	2534	58	2.4 : 1
<u>LYNN</u>							
13.06.1455/24.01.1457	242	211*	453*	449*	449*		1 : 1
29.09.1459/24.11.1461	147	20	167	1146	1146		1 : 6.7
19.11.1464/19.11.1465	667	30	697	618	618		1.1 : 1
19.11.1465/02.11.1466	200	64*	264*	587*	587*		1 : 2.2
02.11.1466/02.11.1467	193	40	233	346	346	16	1 : 1.5
02.11.1467/02.11.1468	69	28	97	281	281		1 : 2.9

<sup>1</sup> Based on a value of £1 6s. 8d. per cloth.

<sup>2</sup> Based on a value of 40s. per hundredweight.

\* Minimum. Although totals for cloth exports are complete for the entire period, particulars of 3d. customs accounts, which distinguish Hanseatic exports from imports, are fragmentary and sometimes do not coincide with complete Exchequer years. In these instances the Hanseatic total for 3d. imports and exports is shown as a minimum for the period indicated.

### A.1.3 HANSEATIC TRADE BALANCES 1474-1491

Port and Date	Est. val. in £ of cloth exports <sup>1</sup>	Val. in £ of Petty Custom exports	Total Value in £ of exports	Total Value in £ of imports	Val. in £ of Petty Custom imports	Val. in £ of wax imports <sup>2</sup>	Ratio of export to import values
<u>BOSTON</u>							
29.09.1487/29.09.1488	89	1	90	262	262		1 : 2.9
<u>IPSWICH</u>							
29.09.1481/29.09.1482	303	13	316	317	304	13	1 : 1
<u>LYNN</u>							
13.11.1480/29.09.1481	245	94	339	288	200	88	1.2 : 1
29.09.1483/29.09.1484	118	103	221	349	321	28	1 : 1.6
29.09.1486/29.09.1487	61	56	117	204	200	4	1 : 1.7
29.09.1487/29.09.1488	372	193	565	938	838	100	1 : 1.6
29.09.1498/29.09.1490	43	166	209	300	300		1 : 1.4
29.09.1490/29.09.1491	40	147	187	544	436	108	1 : 2.9
<u>NEWCASTLE</u>							
28.10.1488/29.09.1489	12	131	143	342	342		1 : 2.4

### A.1.3 HANSEATIC TRADE BALANCES 1492-1510

Port and Date	Est val. in £ of cloth exports <sup>1</sup>	Val. in £ of Petty Custom exports	Total Value in £ of exports	Total Value in £ of imports	Val. in £ of Petty Custom imports	Val. in £ of wax imports <sup>2</sup>	Ratio of export to import values
<u>BOSTON</u>							
29.09.1491/29.09.1492	194	191	385	1469	1321	148	1 : 3.8
<u>IPSWICH</u>							
29.09.1491/29.09.1492	278	nil	278	647	603	44	1 : 2.3
29.09.1505/29.09.1506	nil	nil	nil	161	47	114	1 : 161
<u>LYNN</u>							
29.09.1494/29.09.1495	63	131	194	121	121		1.6 : 1
29.09.1503/29.09.1504	164	3	167	443	443		1 : 2.6
<u>NEWCASTLE</u>							
29.09.1499/29.09.1500	16	85	101	146	144	2	1 : 1.4
29.09.1500/29.09.1501	1	66	67	55	55		1.2 : 1
29.09.1505/29.09.1506	7	216	223	186	180	6	1.2 : 1

<sup>1</sup> Based on a value of £1 6s. 8d. per cloth.

<sup>2</sup> Based on a value of 40 s. per hundredweight.



# A.1.4 DANZIG'S ENGLISH IMPORT TRADE 1474-1476\*

Ships and Cargoes		1474	1475	1476
<hr/>				
<u>"uth Engelant"</u> <sup>1</sup>	Ships / Laden Ships	-	2/2	12/11
Cloth	Terling	-	5.5	30
	Pack	-	-	1
	Single	-	5	30
Lead	Foder	-	-	6
	Centner	-	-	31.5
	"Stuck"	-	6	-
Salt	Hundredweight	-	-	3.5
Wine (Gascon)	Pipe	-	-	2
	Hogshead	-	-	7
Herring	Last	-	-	6
<u>"von Lunden"</u> <sup>2</sup>	Ships / Laden Ships	-	1/1	-
Cloth	Terling	-	7.5	-
	Pack	-	-	-
	Single	-	-	-
Salt	Hundredweight	-	2	-
<u>"von Lindn"</u> <sup>3</sup>	Ships / Laden Ships	-	1/1	1/1
Cloth	Terling	-	3	1.5
	Pack	-	6	3
	Single	-	2	-
"Fygn"	"Stuck"	-	30	-
Wine ("Romanie") ("Hispanisch") ("Bastert") (Unspecified)	Vat	-	2	-
	"Stuck"	-	2	-
	Pipe	-	1	-
	Pipe	-	-	4
"Decken"	Pack	-	-	1
Rabbit Pelts	Pack	-	-	2
Salt	Last	-	5	-
<u>"von Holl"</u> <sup>4</sup>	Ships / Laden Ships	2/2	2/1	-
Cloth	Terling	1.5	-	-
	Pack	-	1	-
	Single	28	-	-
Lead	"Stuck"	8	-	-
Unidentified	"Paxken"	2	-	-
	"Pynak"	6	-	-
	"Berdel"	2	-	-
<u>"von Sandewyk"</u> <sup>5</sup>	Ships / Laden Ships	-	1/0	-
<u>"von Nucastel"</u> <sup>6</sup>	Ships / Laden Ships	-	-	1/1
Wine (Gascon)	"Stuck"	-	-	4

<sup>1</sup> WAPG. 300.19/5 137,186,249,256,279,281,289,290,297,299,304.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 121. <sup>3</sup> Ibid. 123,206. <sup>4</sup> Ibid. 81,130. <sup>5</sup> Ibid. 122.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 257. \* Damage to the manuscript (WAPG. 300.19/5) renders some entries for 1476 illegible. These figures summarize only those entries which unquestionably refer to ships arriving from England, and therefore actually represent minimum totals.

A.1.5 MAJOR STEELYARD MERCHANTS 1490-91\*

Merchant & Civic Affiliation	Broadcloths exported	Val. in £ of Petty Custom exports	Val. in £ of Petty Custom imports	Val. in £ of wax imports
Tylman Barck (L)	566	26	85	100
Hermann Bergentrik (H)	732	85	893	-
Johann Blitterswik (K)	518	103	372	-
Dethert Brander (D)	250	13	31	180
Peter Ecksted (D)	422	146	289	86
Johann Greverod (K)	442	29	25	-
Arnold Metelar (D)	593	129	465	70
Hans Mulner (D)	791	104	82	232
Hermann Overcamp (D)	510	103	191	22
Hermann Plough (D)	499	133	180	416
Johann Questenberck (K)	449	77	329	-
Hermann Rinck (K)	469	58	189	-
Berthold van Ryne (H)	329	21	585	-
Peter Sano (D)	496	64	300	42
Johann Symlinck (K)	279	116	283	-
Hans Stagnet (D)	944	138	250	126

(D) Danzig (H) Hamburg (K) Cologne (L) Lübeck.

\* PRO. E122 78/9.



A.2.1 Composit of the cargoes freighted by shipper Paul Roole between Danzig and England, December 1467 - August 1468. PRO. E122 97/9, WAPG. 300.19/3 4r.,21v., HUB. IX no. 519.

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In Navi Paul Roole intrante [Lynn] xi die Decembris [1467]  
 de eodem magistro de Hansa pro di last olii val' l s. item pro i nest counters val' x s.  
 item pro una cista cum vi scok trenchours iii dussenis pruse skynnes et iii<sup>c</sup> uln prusie de  
 Inderland val'iiii li. item pro ii cistis cum xx scok de trenchours et doubz pecis lewent  
 continent' c uln val' xl s.  
 summa val' in toto ix li. ----- cust' ii s. iii d.

In Navi Pauli Roole exeunte [Lynn] xxviii die Februarii [1468]  
 de eodem magistro de Hansa pro decem pannis curtis sine grano ----- cust' x s.  
 de Hennyng Buryng de Hansa pro x pannis curtis sine grano ----- cust' x s.

uth Engelant [Danzig, 1468]  
 schipper Paul Roel syn schip  
 item eyn paxken laken [lx] mrc item iiiii last laken [v mrc]  
 Peter Schomaker eyn paxken laken x li.  
 Hans van Plauen eyn paxken laken l mrc'

In Navi Pauli Roole de Hansa intrante [Lynn] x die Maii [1468]  
 de eodem magistro de Hansa pro xx<sup>c</sup> waynscots val' xx li. item pro i last clapholt  
 val' xl s. item pro cc remis val' xl s. item pro ii lastis asshes val' xl s.  
 item pro i last et di osmondi val' vi li. item pro uno nest counters val' x s. item pro  
 iiiii bunches de botulf iron val' xl s. item pro vi pecis lewent course val' xl s.  
 summa val' in toto xxxvi li. x s. ----- cust' ix s. i d.ob  
 de Hans van Plaughe de Hansa pro i last lini val' vi li. item pro viii lastis trane  
 val' viii li. item pro di last osmundi val' xl s. item pro doubz nest counters val' xx s.  
 item pro una cista cum v scok trenchours ii bundell wyre sex paris pruse gloves et pro  
 i last baste val' xx s. item pro i scok pruse platers val' xx d.  
 summa val' in toto xviii li. xx d. ----- cust' iiiii s. vi d.

[Helsingor, 1468 - Whitsuntide: 4th-7th June]

uth Engelant [Danzig, 1468]  
 schipper Paul Roel syn schip invorpalt coustat lx mrc'  
 item eyn paxken laken und vi last laken xii li. item ii last [molt']  
 Jacob Wulf eyn paxken laken iii li.

Navi Pauli Role intrante [Lynn] xi Augusti [1468]  
 de eodem magistro de Hansa pro xii<sup>c</sup> waynscots val' xii li. item pro i last clapholt  
 val' xx s. item pro xxx ores val' v s. item pro iiiii net counters val' xl s. item pro  
 xi cistis cum cxviii scokke trenches val' xlvi s. viii d. item pro ii douden pair  
 playng tables val. x s. item pro uno scok tromp' glasses val' v s. item pro iiiii  
 fethirbedde cum sex drinkyng cannes et pro vi peper quernes val' xx s. item pro uno  
 last pic val' xx s. item pro una douden tankards pro xxvi uln lewent et pro viii scokke  
 w[...]nyng val' xx s.  
 summa val' in toto xxi li. vi s. xx d. ----- cust' vi s. iv d.  
 de Simon Pigot indigena pro M waynscots val' x li. item pro di last clapholt val' x s.  
 item pro di last barell hed' val' vi s. viii d. item pro di lastis pich et tar val' xl s.  
 item pro ii lastis woode asshes val' xl s. item pro iii bundell de botulph iron  
 val. xxx s. item pro di last flex val' l s. item pro doubz peciis cere val' x s.  
 item pro doubz barellis olii val' xx s.  
 summa val' in toto xx li. vi s. viii d. ----- subs' xx s.

A.2.2    Composit of cargoes freighted to and from London in the "Maria" of the Steelyard.  
March 1481.\* PRO. E122 194/24,25.

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De Navi Luberti van Boke vocata Maria de Steleyord [intrante] eodem die [vii die Marcii]

De Tylman Barke de Hans' pro x lastis cinerum iii lastis x barellis terr  
precium ----- xiii li. xvi s. viii d.  
De Gerardo Lesbern de Hans' pro i strawe cere ponderis ----- xi quintall.  
De Henrico Lathuson de Hans' pro vi barellis piscis salsi et ii lastis fungie  
precium ----- xxii li.  
De Lamberto Rotard de Hans' pro vi barellis calib' et di last allecis  
precium ----- xxxviii li.  
De Stephano Branche de Hans' pro un last piscis salsi  
precium ----- iiii li.

In Navi Luberti van Boke [exeunte] eodem die [xiiii die Marcii]

De Matheo Hinkylman pro i bal cum xliii pannis di sine grano ----- Hans'.  
et pro ii peciis worsted dupl' ----- Hans'.  
et pro xiiii god' str' wall' precium ----- x s.  
De Lamberto Rotard pro i fardello cum vi pannis sine grano ----- Hans'.  
et pro iii<sup>c</sup> god' str' wall' precium ----- x li.  
De Gerardo Lesbern pro i bal cum xxviii pannis sine grano ----- Hans'.  
De Herman Overcamp' pro i bal cum xxiii pannis sine grano ----- Hans'.  
De Willelmo Scapehusen pro i bal cum xviii pannis sine grano ----- Hans'.  
et pro xx god' str' wall' et i baskett cum iiii cadys sprot  
precium ----- xviii s. iiii d.  
De Johanne van Strawlyn pro i bal cum xvii pannis sine grano ----- Hans'.  
et pro xl god' str' wall' precium ----- xxvi s. viii d.  
De Henrico Lathusen pro un bal cum xxvii pannis sine grano ----- Hans'.  
et pro lxx god' str' wall' precium ----- xlvi s. viii d.  
De Hans Stut pro i bal cum xxvi pannis sine grano ----- Hans'.  
et pro xxiii god' str' wall' precium ----- xvi s. viii d.  
De Johanne Sewik pro i bal cum xx pannis sine grano ----- Hans'.  
et pro i roll frise precium ----- xiii s. iiii d.  
De Herman Plough pro i bal cum xxiiii pannis sine grano ----- Hans'.  
et pro xxi god' str' wall' precium ----- xiii s. iiii d.  
De Alberto Falland pro i bal cum xxv pannis sine grano ----- Hans'.  
et pro lxxvi god' str' wall' precium ----- l s.  
De Edwardo Johnson alienigena pro ii<sup>a</sup> pellium cuniculorum sess MD stag'  
et v dussenis pellium vulpi' precium ----- vi li.  
De Johanne Kaynys pro xviii vg' pannis sine grano ----- al'.  
et pro vii peciis str' wall' precium ----- xlvi s. viii d.  
De Thoma Screven pro i fardello cum v pannis sine grano ----- ind'.

\* Lubert van Boke off-loaded mixed cargo at London on three subsequent occasions during the summer of 1481, and he departed with cloth shipments in late April and again in June.



Names of dyvers marchautes of Coleyn that hath sent certeyn bales of cloth by watir fro London to Gravesende and so forth to be caried by lande to Dover and there to have ben reshipped over the See which yit passid not Cauntirbury but there ben still the which clothes were customed in the seid porte of London as folowith.

- De Hans Langerman viii die Februarii i bal cum xv pannis sine grano xxxiiii god' pannis striet wall' i bal cum xvi pannis sine grano xlvi god' pannis striet wall'.  
Item xviii die Februarii i bal cum xix pannis di sine grano l god' pannis striet wall' i bal cum xv pannis iiiii virg' sine grano vii virge violet in grano lxxv god' pannis striet wall'.
- ✠ De Johanne Berkam xx die Februarii i bal cum xviii pannis sine grano xxx god' pannis striet wall'.
- +5r De Everardo Clippyng xviii die Februarii i bal cum xviii pannis ix virg' sine grano xxx god' striet wall'.
- +5 i bal secundo die Marcii cum xx pannis sine grano xxv god' pannis striet wall'.
- ✠ De Hans Herderote tercio die Februarii i bal cum xviii pannis sine grano xxxiii god' striet wall' i roll fris' wall' Item secundo die Marcii i bal cum xviii pannis sine grano xxvi god' pannis streit wall' i roll fris' wall'.
- ✠ De Reginaldo Lobryht secundo die Marcii i bal cum xix pannis sine grano xl god' pannis striet wall'.
- +b De Petro Cangheter secundo die Marcii xx pannis sine grano l god' pannis striet wall' i bal cum xx pannis sine grano xl god' pannis striet wall'.
- ✠ De Johanne van Brele secundo die Marcii i bal cum xviii pannis sine grano iiiii\*\* god' pannis striet wall'.
- ✠ De Johanne van Dorn secundo die Marcii i bal cum xvii pannis sine grano xxx god' pannis striet wall' i bal cum xvi pannis viii virg' sine grano l god' pannis striet wall' i bal cum xviii pannis sine grano xx god' striet wall' i bal cum xvii pannis sine grano xx god' pannis striet wall'.
- ✠ De Johanne Fernam secundo die Marcii i bal cum xviii pannis sine grano xl god' pannis striet wall' i bal cum xviii pannis sine grano xxxvi god' pannis striet wall'.
- ✠ De Johanne van A secundo die Marcii ii bal cum xxxvi pannis sine grano xviii god' pannis striet wall'.
- ✠ De Goswyn Sherell secundo die Marcii ii bal cum xxxvi pannis sine grano iiiii\*\* god' striet wall' Item ii bal cum xxxvii pannis sine grano iiiii\*\* god' pannis striet wall'.

The bales folowyng were not shipped nethir leyden in the Watir but leid in cartes to be caried by lande to Dover and there to be customed the which bales went no further than Cauntirbury and there yet lien stytle.

- De Goswyn Shorell viii die Marcii i bal cum xx pannis sine grano i panni skarlet qt' xxxiii virg' di xl god' pannis striet wall'.
- De Hans Harderote i bal cum xix pannis vi virg' sine grano i gros poynt' i double bonett ii roll fris xl god' pannis striet wall'.
- De Petro Cangheter i bal cum xx pannis sine grano l god' pannis striet wall'.
- De Johanne Stomell i bal cum xxii pannis sine grano xxx god' striet wall'.
- De Johanne Fernam i bal cum xvii pannis di sine grano iiiii virg' di skarlet xliiii god' pannis striet wall' i bal cum xx pannis sine grano i pec' iii virg' worsted lxi god' pannis striet wall'.

\* Since the owners of the cloths are identified as Cologne merchants rather than Hansards, the account may date from sometime between early 1469 and 1474, when Cologners enjoyed a unique status in England. All the Cologners mentioned were in England or had goods seized there in 1468, and Johann van Briele died in 1473. However, if some of the consignments eventually were in fact customed at Dover, then they would be included in the enrolments for Sandwich, and therefore the only plausible date would be February/March of the Exchequer year 1462-63. See Studies, 355-56.

A.2.4 Composit of Hanseatic shipping in London 1490-1491. PRO. E122 78/9.

Shipper & Civic Affiliation	Date of Arrival	Principal Cargo	Date of Departure	Principal Cargo*
Lubert van Boke (Steelyard)			30.09.1490	452 cloths
Harman Beckman (H)			30.09.1490	1066 cloths
Hans Merghbrough (H)			30.09.1490	565 cloths
Jacob Hammad (H)			30.09.1490	2037 cloths
Laurence Fredeland (D) <sup>1</sup>	31.09.1490	bulk cargo	04.11.1490	511 cloths
Ulryk Bernys (D) <sup>1</sup>	31.09.1490	bulk cargo	04.11.1490	314 cloths
Cort Defort (D?)	26.10.1490	fish/bulk	12.11.1490	712 cloths
Hans Rutter	26.10.1490	fish/osmund		
Dominic Aalant (D) <sup>2</sup>	26.10.1490	salt	09.03.1491	hides/lead
Harman Brogelman (D)	26.10.1490	salt	04.02.1491	62 cloths
Hans Merghbrough (H) <sup>3</sup>	16.12.1490	mixed cargo	11.04.1491	853 cloths
Harman Beckman (H)	16.12.1490	mixed cargo	11.04.1491	1263 cloths
Lubert van Boke (Steelyard)	16.12.1490	mixed cargo	07.04.1491	805 cloths
Hans Mulner (D) <sup>1</sup>	02.03.1491	salt	13.04.1491	1029 cloths
Cort Defort (D?)	11.08.1491	fish/bulk		
Nichlaus Semlond (H?)	11.08.1491	fish/bulk		
Derik Plagin (H?)	11.08.1491	fish/wax		

(D) Danzig (H) Hamburg

\* Cloth totals apply only to consignments owned by Hansards.

<sup>1</sup> The Danzigers Fredeland, Bernys and Mulner all were at Brouage in the summer of 1492. HUB. XI no. 640.

<sup>2</sup> Aalant departed England on the 11th of April 1491 and was pirated off Walchern a week later. "Caspar Weinreichs Danziger Chronik", Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum. ed. T. Hirsch, (Frankfurt, 1965), IV 782.

<sup>3</sup> Merghbrough was pirated en route from Zealand to England later in the summer. HUB. XI no. 505-06.



- A.3.1 Complaint of Richard Penevel, clothmaker, regarding the balance due for cloth purchased by Niclas Wulff of Danzig, heard by the aldermen of the Steelyard.  
1449. HA Köln Hanse Urkunden U2/133.
- 

Allen den ghenen de dessen unsen breeff sullen seyn off hoeren leesen don wy Alderman und ghemene Copman van der Duetschen Hense nu to London in Englant wesende na unse vronlike grote kentliken apenbarliken met desseme breve tughende Dat upten dagh datum desses breves vor uns es komen de bescheden Ritzart Penevel lakenmaker uns geven to kennende wudanne wijs dat Niclas Wulff van Dantzeke eme van rechter schult schuldich sii van laken de de selve Niclas van eme ghekofft hedde Twintich Engelsche nobelen eme to betalende up sunte Johans dagh to myddensomer de gheleden es int jair uns heren Duysentverhundert sevenundvertich van welker summen he nicht meer untfangen hedde dan Sess nobelen Warvan he uns toghede eyne billen eme van deme vorscreven Niclas dar up ghegeven beseghelt beneden upt Spac[...] myt Roden wasse war inne blickede sodanne merck 本 de wy heel und ghans und ungheserighet in allen eren deelen hebben gheseyn und hoeren leesen ludende van worden to worden alse hijr na gescreven steyt

Item bekenne ick Niclas Wulff dat ick Ritzart Penevel hebbe affghekofft eyn fesses und eyn gram ellick laken vor Teyn nobelen up Sunte Johans dagh to betalende over eyn jaer und den derden pennynck rede desse lakene koffte ick van eme int jaer Sessundvertich hijr up hebbe ick eme ghegeven Twe punt Und want dan de vorscreven Ritzart ume noet sake willen alse he secht nicht van senden en es sick ane zee to voeghen ume de vorscreven anerighe summen to manende So hevet he in der bester formen und wysse alse he van rechte doen solde unde mochte vor unse ghekaren ghesat und gheordinert tot synen vulmechtighen procuratore und honet man den bechedenen Roloff Veltstede van Brunswyck wijser desses breves gevende eme vullenkomen macht de vorscreven anerighe summen to seggende verteyn Engelsche nobelen van deme vorscreven Niclas to manende uptoborende und to untfangende enen twe eder dre vortan to mechtigen off des van no den es de ock hebben de vullenkomen macht dar bij to doende und to latende Quitancien dar van to gevende ghelyck off he selffs dar jeghenwordich und vor oghen w[er] und so wes se samentliken offte bijsunder dar bij doende offte latende werden dat hevet de selve Ritzart vor uns ghelavet stede und vast to haldende to ewighen tyden in kennisse der warheyte so hebbe wy Alderman und ghemene Copman vorscreven uns seghel to Rugge up dessen breeff don drucken int jaer uns heren duysentverhundertneghenundvertich upten sessundtwintichsten dagh van dem Maen de Februarius.

A.3.2 Petition to Chancery by Danziger Hans Schulte for a writ of corpus cum causa in response to actions taken against him by merchants of Hull. ca. 1475-80 or 1483-85. PRO. C1/64/1105.

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To the Right reverend Fader in god Bysshopp of Lincoln Chaunceller of England

Mekely besechith youre good lordshipp Hanse Schulte of Dansk in Puce and William Croyer maister of a shipp of Dansk aforesaid that where the said shipp beyng lade aswell with dyvers goodez and merchaundisez of dyvers merchauntez of Dansk aforsaid as with other goodez and merchaundisez of oon John Nappet of Kyngeston uppon Hull and of other merchauntez of the same towne comyng uppon the See hederwerd in to this Realme a shipp of Werre of oon Yongker Gerard beyng in here dyvers pyratez and men of Werre bourdid and entrid the said Shipp of Dansk and toke oute of the same shipp agenst the will of youre seid besechers suche goodez and merchaundisez as pleasid theym aswell of the goodez of the seid merchauntez of Dansk as of the goodez of the said John Nappet and other merchauntez englissh And after that your seid besechers with the same shipp of Dansk departyd with the residue of the goodez and merchaundisez beyng in here and came to the port of the seid towne of Kyngeston uppon Hull Where the said John Nappet and other persones of the same towne by colour of the takyng of the said goodez by the said pyratez have takyn dyvers actionz agenst youre said besechers afore the maire and sherif of the said town and have theym arrest and gretely trouble and vexe theym by the same And how be it that noon defaute is in theym as knowith god And also the said takyng was doon uppon the See oute of the Jurisdiction of the seid towne Yet they entende to condempne youre seid besechers and recovere agenst theym amendes for their seid goodez so taken And the same youre besechers have noo knowlech socour nor help be cause they ben strangers and therfor likly to be undon agenst all right and good conscience Without youre good lordshipp be shewed to theym in this behalf it please therfor your seid lordshipp the premyssez tenderly to considre and theruppon to graunte a corpus cum causa directe to the maire and sherif of the seid Towne of Kyngeston uppon Hull commaundyng theym and everych of theym by the same to have the bodyes of youre seid besechers and everych of them [which] causez of their arrest afore the kyng in his chauncerie at a certeyn day ther the seid cause and mater to be examined and directe accordyng to right and conscience And this for the love of god and in way of charite.



A.3.3 Petition to Chancery by Steelyard merchant Hermann Rinck for a writ of certioari in response to an action of trespass brought against him. ca. 1486-93. PRO. C1/158/47.

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To the moste reverende fadre in god the Archiebischop of Caunterbury  
primate of al England and Chaunceller of the same

Sheweth and lamentably complaineth unto your grace your daily Oratour Herman Rynge merchaunt how that where as he but late ago was occupied in the Stilyard in feate of merchaundise ther cam thidre unto him one Johane White senglewoman Which Johane as it appereth by hir owne confession made in writing before credible personnes was wont to daunce and make revells in hir maisters hous som tyme in mannys clothing and somtyme naked offering her self unto your said Oratour to be at his commaundement and he seeing hir boldnesse mystrusted hir and charged hir to avoide from him Wherwith she toke a disdeyn and displeasure and wold nat departe unto tyme that he caused one of his servants to geve hir ii or iii stripes and therby made hir to avoide away from him Wherupon one Stephan Regate hir maister which is a nedy man and a combrons to dele withal beeing prive of hir comyng to your said Oratour as it seemed and consenting therunto to thentent to finde a mean of action ageinst him for to make him to lose money in the like wise as he delecth with many other men folowed after the said myshyving woman and awaited upon hir comyng out of the said place And for because he herd by hir confession wher and with whome she had been and how she was delt withal as above said he of his malicioux disposicion without eny other grounde cause or matier commensed an action of trespasse ageinst your said Oratour before the Shirifs of London surmitting that he had taken away his servant to his damage of xx li. Unto which action your said Oratour appered and according to the trouthe pleted nat gilty so that thei wer at an issue of xii men to trye the same And wher as your said Oratour beeing a straunger had medietate lingue as the [custum] is thei wer so tryed out by the grete meanes and labour of the said Stephen and other of his affinitie to whome thei wer neghtbours that the whole Enquest was made of commone Jurrers at his [.....] Which Enquest appered at the furst calling and never wold examyn the matier nor [.....] her eny Evidence geven for the partie defendaunt nat fering god nor shame of the world without deliberacion contrare to al trouthe founde your said Oratour gilty of trespas and gave damage lli li. or theraboute besides the costs of the courte ageinst al right and good conscience to his grete prejudice rebouke and hurt Wherupon gracioux lord the Juge of the Courte there havynge enformation of the trouthe of the matier and of the wilfull perjury of the said Jury of his conscience respited to geve Jugement of and upon the premysses to thentent that your grace myght have the matier examined before the same Wherby the trouthe myght be perfiteley understood please it your grace in consideracion of the premysses with the circumstaunce to graunt herupon a Certioari directed to the Shirifs of London commaunding theim by the same to certifie the cause of therreste of your said Oratour before the king in his Chauncerie at a certayn day by you to be lymyted ther to be examined as right and conscience shal require At the reverence of god and in wey of charite And he shal pray specially for your good and gracious long prosperite.

A.3.4 Petition to Chancery by London merchants Nicholas Wylde and William Wylcokks for writs of sub poena to be directed to the alderman and council of the Steelyard regarding the alleged debt of Dinant merchants. ca. 1486-93.\* PRO. C1/111/49.

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To the right reverent Fadre in god John Archebisshopp of Caunterbury  
and Chaunceler of Englund

In the moost humble wise shewith unto your good lordship your daily Oratours Nicholas Wylde and William Wylcokks of London merchaunts where oon Francke Savage and William Carpenter merchaunts of Denaunt ben indettyd and owe unto your said oratours the some of clxxv li. sterling in the which some the said Francke Savage and William Carpenter by ther obligacions ben bounden to the said Nicholas Wylde as wele to thuse of the said William as of the said Nicholas. And bifore that ther dayes of payment were expired and past the same Francke and William Carpenter and ther attorneys avoyded out of this Realme of Englund not contentyng your said oratours of the said some nor any parte therof. After whos avoydeng the noble prince of good memory king Edwarde the iiiii<sup>th</sup> graunted unto the hole Feliship of merchaunts of the Stiliard within the cite of London x<sup>m</sup> li. for restitution of certein injuries to theym comytted Which Feliship ordeyned a cheste in the Stiliard and vi keyes therto and enacted ther a mong theym that the said x<sup>m</sup> li. shuld be put in the same cheste as it shuld growe and shuld never be taken owte till the hole some were fully growyn and that vi merchaunts shuld have vi keyes of the same cheste for the said entent Which x<sup>m</sup> li. was fully growen ii yeres past and the Felaship aforsaid allowed therof unto the forsaid Towne of Denaunt Mxiiii for ther parte. Wherof was allowed unto the said Francke Savage and William Carpenter for such goods as they loste v<sup>c</sup> li. sterling and your said oratours havng knowlache of the same allowance the said Nicholas affermed a pleynt of dette of clxxv li. before the Maire of London agenst the said Francke Savage and William Carpenter and attached the said v<sup>c</sup> in the handez of Herman Plough then alderman of Stiliard and the same Harman ys now discharged of beyng alderman so that the said attachement ys avoyded and oon John Grevererd newlye chosen alderman which with the said Feliship in to this day hath in kepyng the said v<sup>c</sup> li. in the owne propre handes for ther discharge. How be yt that your said oratours by course of the comen lawe can have no recovere therof bycause the forsaid Feliship yerly chesith a new aldirman Please it therefore your good lordship of your blessed dispocion the premisses tenderly considered to graunt unto your said oratours severall writtes of sub pena to be directed unto the said John Grevererd now alderman of the Feliship aforsaid and to the counsell of the Stiliard to appere byfore your lordship at a certeyn day and uppon ther apperaunces to examyne theym in whose handes the forsaid v<sup>c</sup> li. remayneth and furthermor to ordeyne and see by your blessed meanes a wey by the which your said oratours may attayne unto the recovere of ther duyte accordyng to right and good conscience. And thys at the reverence of god and in wey of charite.

Plegii de proseguendo Thomas Lamberd de London yoman

Johannes White de eadem Bruer

\* Johann Greverod and the Steelyard fellowship denied that either £500 or any of Carpenter's or Savage's goods had been attached as alleged, and Wylcokks and Wylde were prosecuted by writ of sub poena. On 8th November 1492 Wylcokks and the widow and executrix of Wylde released and gave quitclaim of any sequestrations of money held by Hermann Plough and the debts of Carpenter and Savage, totaling £219 10s., by reason of bonds dated 8th March 1478 and 26th May 1479. PRO. C1/111/50, CCR. 1485-1500. 189.



A . 4                    CONTRACTS, BROKERAGE AND LOANS

- A.4.1     Contract between Sir Ralf Percy and others and William de Gaunt of York and John van Boyghan of Danzig for delivery of grain at Newcastle. 1453.  
          PRO. C47/13/10(3).
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This endenture made the xxiiii day of Juyll the yere of Kyng Henry sext xxxi betwix Rauf Percy knight Robert of Warkam and Richard Heryng on that oon partye and William of Gaunt citezein and marchaunt of York and John van Boyghan late maister of a ship called George of Danske othirwise called a Sprushulk on that othir partye witnessith that the said William and John hath frely geven the day abovesaid unto the said Sir Rauf Robert and Richard for a rewarde cc li. of englissh money the which shall be paid as after folowith that is to say at the said William and John shall delyver at the Newcastell or at the Northshelles within iiii dayes aftir the date of this writyng unto the said Rauf Robert and Richard alle the rye at is in the said ship called the George of Danske of the which the said John van Boyghen was late maister by quarter and togider of corne not rotyn nor wete and at the said Rauf Robert and Richard shall take every quarter for iii s. iiii d. unto the tyme at the said some of cc li. be paid. And if so be at all the said corne by the said price wille not extende to the value of the said some of cc li. than the said William and John shall at the Newcastell aforesaid forthwith at the same tyme of othir godys sufficient and able beyng in the said ship or withoute suche as the said Rauf Robert and Richard Heryng shall agre to and by suche prise as the said Robert Wark Richard Heryng and Richard of Stocton set thereon. In witnesse herof ayther parties above writen to the partes of these endentures enterchaungeably have set to their seales day and yere above writen.

- A.4.2     Bond for the purchase of cloth by Hanseatic merchant Henry van Echte from John Stede of Colchester. 1463.\* PRO. C1/31/495.
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Item I Henry van Echte have bought of John Stede xxii clothes everich cloth for iii li. Summe lxvi li. herfore I shall geve him vi<sup>c</sup> wex everich c for vii nobles and oon Bale of mader the c xvi s. and vi d. vi<sup>m</sup> litmose every c for vii s. and vi d. iiii<sup>c</sup> [hulsom] everch c for v mrc and whatsoever the overpluse drawith to pay in money the oon halff at. Whitsontyde and that other halff at Mighelmas anno lxiii the friday afore palmyssunday.

\* The bond was presented as evidence in support of a request by van Echte for a writ of sub poena against Stede, who, claiming non-payment of the obligation, took possession of 98 quarters of woad which van Echte had stored with him in Colchester. PRO. C1/31/494, 496-98.

To the wurshipful and reverent Fadir in god the Bisshop of Wynchestre  
Chaunceler of Ingland

Mekely besechen your pour bedmen Gasper Sculte Maister and owner of a hulk callid  
le Beriet of Dansk in Almaine Nicholas Sculte and Thomas Byman that where as it was late  
acorded bytwene the seid Gasper and on John Frenssh of Wynchelsee that the seid John shuld  
freight lxx charge salt xxii for xx in the seid hulk in the Baye as sone tobe laden and  
redy to saile as other shippes of his felauship then ther beyng and the seid salt tobe  
delivered atte Wynchelsee or atte Yepyswich paiyng for the freight of every charge xvii s.  
vi d. and when the seid Gasper was comen into the Baye with the seid hulk the seid John  
had noe good in merchaundise nor by way of eschaunge to bey any salt to furnyssh the seid  
freight and wherby the seid Gasper taried in the seid Baye behynd thothir seid shippes  
viii wikes to his gret perell and inpartie. And ther the seid John labored to Ambrose  
Lomelyne merchaunte of Jene ...the which Ambrose by the suretee of your seid besechers  
lent and toke to the seid John iiii\*\*xiiii arc sterlyng with the which he purveied salt  
and charged it in the same hulk to be caried to London And your seid besechers bonde them  
and eche of them were plegges and bounden in the Courte of the Baye to paye the seid  
iiii\*\*xiiii arc to John Lomelyne or to his certain attorney atte the Cite of London upon  
the adventure of the see fro port of Colette unto the Ryver of Themse withyn xxx dayes  
after the seid hulk arived in the seid Ryver and the seid John in the seid court permitted  
and bonde hymseff to save and aquite your seid besechers harmeles agayn the seid Lomelyne  
and that he shuld not take nor receyve any of the seid salt into the tyme that he hade  
discharged your seid besechers agayn the seid Lomelyne and paid the seid Gasper of his  
seid freight as in certain lettres therof made in the seid court sealed with the seale for  
contractis ther ordeyned more pleyntly it apereth and when the seid Gasper was comen with  
the seid hulk into the seid Ryver and had been beden there xxiiii daies and more the seid  
John Frenssh came not for to aquite your seid besechers agayn the seid Lomelyne of their  
seid bondes and obligacions or to pay the seid freight to the seid Gasper but oon William  
Long with whome the seid Gasper never spake byfore came to London and ther surmittyng that  
the seid salt soe charged by the seid John Frenssh shuld be the good of the seid William  
entrid and playnt byfor the Shireves of London agayn the seid Gasper surmittyng by the  
same that your seid besecher shuld have take a way with force in London lxx charge of salt  
to the value of cc li. and aftirward oon Thomas Hoo Squier made another plaint agayn the  
seid Gasper for the same salt and how be it that the seid Gasper prefered and prefereth to  
the seid William and Thomas Hoo that if thei will discharge your seid besechers agayn the  
seid Lomelyne and pay the freight to the seid Gasper and fynde hym surete tobe saved  
harmelesse and tobe quiet agayn the seid John Frenssh the seid Gasper will deliver to them  
all the salt by the seid John Frenssh charged in the seid hulk yet netheles the seid  
Gasper is thus vexed and trobled to thentent that he shuld ... delivere the seid salt  
without any freight therfor to be paid to the seid Gasper or any discharge of the seid  
bondes and obligacions agayn the seid Lomelyne into his gret hurt by the which vexacion he  
is like to abide behynd other hulkes of his contre in grete perell and inpartie of hymself  
and of his seid hulk and all his goodis Please it your gracious lordship to considere the  
premisses and to send for the seid William and Thomas Hoo to apere byfor your seid  
gracious lordship ther tobe examined and ruled in the premisses as right and reson will  
desire so that your seid besechers maybe discharged agayn the seid Lomelyne and the seid  
Gasper paid of his freight and discharged agayn the seid John Frenssh for the love of god  
and in way of charite.



A.4.4 Proceedings in Chancery regarding a loan by Danzig merchant Tydman Valand for the repair and revictualling of an English ship at Danzig. 1479. PRO. C1/32/356.

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To the most reverend Fader in god Archbisshepp of Yorke  
Chaunceler off England

Mekely besechith your godd lordshipp Tedman Foland of Danske in Pruse that where in August the xix<sup>th</sup> yere of the Kyng our sovereyne lord oon Thomas Selman then purser of a shipp callid the Cristofer of Lenne wherof oon Thomas Wright of Lenne and John Tyge of the same then were owners and proprietares for the same shipp then beyng att Danske aforesaid in necessite aswell for vitayle and reparation as other necessities there borrowed and hadd by eschaunge of your seid besecher lxxiiii marc pruce to the behauf and use of the said shipp and owners were to pay for every marc pruce iii s. iiii d. Englyssh at the comyng home of the said shipp in sauftye or withyn a moneth after the same your besecher to bere the adventure of the said money in the said shipp as in several bylles therof by the said purser made redy to be shewyd more playnly shall apper And the which payment well and trewly to be fulfilled and doon the said purser by the said bylles bonde the said shipp Which said lxxiiii marc pruce drawith in money Englissh after the said rate to the some of xii li. vi s. viii d. and came to the use and behofe of the said shipp and owners And how be it that after that the same shipp came home from Danske aforesaid to Lenne in saftie and theruppon the said owners have payed vi li. of the said some of xii li. vi s. viii d. to the attorney and factor of your said besecher in this behalfe yet the said owners nor purser althow they oft tymes have been required vi li. vi. s. viii d. residue of the said some of xii li. vi s. viii. have not payed nor yet woll butt vaerly refuse to pay it agenst all right and good conscience Wherfor forasmoch as your said besecher hath no remedy by the common lawe in this behalfe it please your good lordshipp the premisses tenderly considerid to graunt writtes of suo pena severally directe to the said Thomas Wright and John Tyge commaundyng theym by the same to apper afore the Kyng in his Chauncerye att a certeyn day ther to aunswere to the premisses and over that to do and receyve as right and conscience shall require in this behalfe And this for the love of god.

Plegii de prosequendo Willelmus Crabbe de London yoman

Thomas Hauke de eadem yoman

A.4.5 London brokerage rates for English cloth. Late 15th century. BL. Cotton Vesp. E IX 108v.

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#### Off Brokerage

This is the rewle and rate of all maner of merchaundyse after the statute and custome of London what a broker schall have for his brokerage. Fyrst of wollyn cloth as followith For ffyn clothe of London makyng as skarlett clothys engrayned and ffyn whytts off xviii or xx marke off every pec such cloth the brokerage ys iiis. iiid. For myddyll cloth off London makyng the broker schall have for every pec englyschman xiid. of an alyen xxd. For [lodlows] and northhamtons and for clothys callyd ffyn [breds] of essex of every suche clothe the brokerage ys of an englyschman vid. alyen xiid.

A.4.6 Proceedings in Chancery regarding alleged non-payment for cloth purchased by Hanseatic merchant Lutkyn Buring from London draper Peers Starke. 1502-03.\*  
PRO. C1/357/65.

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To the moste reverent Fader in God William Archebisshop of Caunterbury  
and Chaunceler of England

Mekely be sechith youre good lordshipp youre daily Oratoure Peers Starke Citezyn and draper of London that where oon Lutkyn Buryng marchaunt of Almayn now abydyng among the Esterlyngs at Stylyarde in London bought of youre seyde Suppliaunt in London the xxiiii<sup>th</sup> daye of Maye the xviii yere of oure soveraynge lorde reyn' kyng Henry the vii<sup>th</sup> xxiiii yerdys of Wolleyn cloth for xii li. sterling that ys to wete xii yerdys therof of vyolett in grayn and other xii yerdys of crymsyn in grayn and when the seyde Lutkyn hadde receyvyd the seyde clothe he defslyred youre seyde suppliaunt to take an obligacion [....] oon John Wayffer of Frome Selwode stode bounden to hym in viii li. for payment of viii parcel of the seyde xi li. and also to giff hym respite of the seyde residue unto the Fest of the Natyvite of Seynt John Baptist than next ensuyng wherunto your seyde Suppliaunt was agreable uppon this condicion that the seyde Lutkyn shuld bryng the seyde John Wayffer afore youre seyde Suppliaunt afore the seyde Natyvite to [...] [c]onfesse that oblygacion ffor his dede and duete and then become dettour to your seyde Suppliaunt for the seyde viii li. Whych Lutkyn promysed so to do all be it he afterwards contentyd and payed your seyde Suppliaunt the sayd iiii li. but as to the seyde viii li. the same Lutkyn in no wyse wold pay ne yer bryng to your seyde Suppliaunt the sayd John Wayffer to confesse the seyde oblygacion to be his dede and duetye accordyng to his promyse and [covenant] but denyeth his duety and promyse and so by his subtell and untrew meanes wold defraude your seyde Suppliaunte of the seyde viii li. contrary to all ryght and good conscience in consyderacion wherof and also that youre seyde suppliaunt hath no specialte in wrytyng of the seyde Lutkyn for the seyde viii li. Wherfore that ys thought that the seyde Lutkyn wold wage his lawe yf your seyde Suppliaunt shuld sue hym by the comen law hit wold therfore please youre good lordship the premysses consyderyd to graunt a writte of sub pena to be dyrectyd to the seyde Lutky[n] commaundyng hym by the same to apere afore the kyng in his chauncery att a certeyn day by your seyde lordship to be lymettyd ther to answeere to the premysses accordyng to ryght and goold conscience.

Plegii de prosequendo Willelmus Gaston de London gent'

Ricardus Lambert de eadem gent'

\* Buring claimed the obligation of John Wayffer was indeed transferred to Starke as part payment for the cloth, and denied he had agreed to bring Wayffer to Starke to confess the debt. Though protesting that the dispute was a matter of common law and therefore not the concern of Chancery, Buring nevertheless countered with a petition to the Chancellor for a writ of certioari against Starke. PRO. C1/258/77.



A.5.1 Copy of a petition from the Steelyard to the King on behalf of imprisoned  
Hansards. Undated. [ca. August-October 1468] HA Köln Hanse III K 15/47.

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To the most highest and myghty pryncelyng of England and of Fraunce  
and lord of Irland our right good and graceous lord

Shewith in the most humble wyse Gerard Wessell Petyr Bodenclopp Arnold Wynkels and other  
merchauntez of the Hanse of Almayn beyng in this your realme some borne in Coleyn some in  
Dynaunt some in Mynster some in Nemeigh some in Darpmund and some in dyvers other places  
in Almayn sekely besechyng your good grace that where it is compleyned agenst theym by  
dyvers your suggetts certeyn Englissh shipps goodes and merchaundisez to ben taken spoiled  
and robbed in Denmark by the procuryng [steryng] and abbettyng of your seid besechers and  
theruppon desirid your seid besechers to be compellid to make satisfaction to your seid  
suggetts Where as your seid besechers be not gylty in dede of the seid procuryng steryng  
or abbettyng it please your good grace tenderly to conside the old lege anyte and  
intercourse of merchaundise bitwene this your realme and the parties of the Hanse of  
Almayn and how your noble pregenitour kyng Edward the second by his graceous lettres  
patentez among other thynges graunted unto the merchauntez of the Hanse of Almayn then  
beyng and to their successours that they nor their goodes no merchaundisez shold be  
arrested or attached for otheris dette or trespas which graunte by your noble pregenitour  
kyng Edward the third and king Richard the seconde and by your highnesse is ratefied  
graunted and confermed by their and your graceous lettres patentez and which libertee the  
seid merchauntez and their predecessours have usid hadd and enjoied and ben entretid  
accordyng to the same graunte without interuption as by dyvers precedentes of recorde  
therof to your good grace more plenely may appere And also how it is ordeigned by estatut  
made the xxvii<sup>th</sup> yere of the full noble reigne of your noble pregenitour aforeseid kyng  
Edward the third that the merchauntez estraungers shall not be empledid or empeched for  
otheris trespas or otheris dette and that it is ordeigned in the v<sup>th</sup> yere of your noble  
pregenitour Richard the seconde aforeseid that merchauntez estraunges beyng of your anyte  
shall frely come abide and merchaundise withyn this your realme and shall under the  
protection and savegard of your highness with all their goodes and merchaundise and in  
leke wyse your noble pregenitour aforeseid and your highnesse by their and your seid  
lettres patentez taken your seid besechers in to your protection and defence and how by  
virtue of the same grauntez statutz and libertees aforeseid said uppon confidence therof  
your seid besechers have more boldly usid and exercisid to come into this your realme  
trustyng the sid libertees and grauntez made unto theym as is aforeseid to be good and  
effectuell and to have theeffecte therof accordyng to the same grauntez by the [power] of  
your highness defence and protection aswell as by your lawes and these premisses  
graceously considerid it please your highness of your most benyngne grace that your seid  
besechers be not compelled to aunswer nor to satesfye for otheris offence and trespas and  
that they may be entretid accordyng to their innocencis in dede and accordyng to the seid  
grauntez statutz and libertees and as they have ben entretid by force of the same afore  
this tyme and this for the love of god and they shall ever pray to god for your most  
roiall estate.



Pyteouslye complaynen un to youre goode lordeshippe youre pore and humble besechers  
ocupiynge and exercisiynge the makynge of clothe and also the utterers of the same beyng  
inhabitauntes withyn the Townes of Bristowe Bathe Wellys Glastynbury Shepton Malette  
Coscombe Trowebrigge Bradeford ffrome Bekyngton and Warmyster yn the countees of Bristowe  
Somerset and Wiltshire and within the contrayes to the same adjioynynge That where youre  
saide pore besechers yn greete nombre have been greetlye occupyed afore this tyme and have  
hadde theyre speciall meanys of theyr lyving and weele yn makynge of clothe and utterynge  
of the same yn greet substaunce and value yerelye to marchauntys Esterlinges of Almayn  
resortynge and beyng withyn this Realme and greetly soo coraged to contynue yn their  
laboure of cloth makynge by cause that the saide marchauntes Esterlinges have soo trewly  
and lovynglye delt by waye of merchaundise with youre saide pore besechers yn suere and  
redy paiements and contentacion of theyre saide cloth to the greet relief and comfort of  
yourre saide pore besechers as it is openly knowen and undirstoud to alle the saide  
marchauntis and contrayes aforesayde entendinge the commie weele of the same Un to that  
nowe of late tyme that the saide marchauntes Esterlinges by the kyngis moost high  
commaundement have been restrayned of their liberte by occasion wherof youre saide pore  
besechers been right grevouslye hurte lakkyng utteraunce and saale of theyre clothe yn  
greet value and by that meane thoo that weere utterers of the same clothe be not of power  
to fynde and ocupie youre saide pore suppliauntez stondynge therefore nowe as people  
dismayde for lakke of ocupacion yn ydelnesse the which is the verry occasion and bygynnyng  
of alle vices and mysgovernaunce and soo likly to growe to the extreme povertie and utter  
undoynge for youre saide pore besechers And that they shalle not mowe to be able ne of  
power by mannys reason to doo ne live ne paie theyre dewtees accordyng to goddis lawes and  
the kyngis withouten youre moost discrete and favorable assistance for theym un to the  
kyngis highnesse for some gracious provision to be hadde for theym yn this behalffe Ytt  
maye please therefore un to youre fulle noble and gracious lordeshippe consideringge by  
yourre high and mooste discrete prudence the greet desolacion discomfort and undoynge of  
yourre rehersed pore besechers and of many other for lakke of ocupacion of cloth makynge  
and utteraunce of the same the which soo contynued also by proces for nown power might  
growe to the great hurte and damages un to the kyngis moost dradde highnesse for nown  
paiement of suche dewtees as of right belongith unto the same his highnesse and also to  
the greet hurte and withdrawynge of the commie weele of this Realme to calle un to youre  
moost gracious and discrete remembraunce the premisses and to provide the weele and  
remedye of youre saide suppliauntez beyng yn this great hevynesse and perplexite And over  
this that it maye like youre gracious lordeshippe that the saide marchauntes Esterlinges  
no verry proves beyng made agenst theym for any suche cause of restraynte maye by youre  
gracious and blessid meanys be to the kyngis moost noble grace acceptable and yn favorable  
wise entretid as frendys havynge their liberte accordyng to the moost oldyst amyte and  
liege of this his noble Realme yn as spedy season as shalle mowe like his goode grace and  
as they maye have the more corage hereafter to bye the saide cloth soo made and uttered as  
ys aforesaid as they have hadde yn tyme passed to the greete weele and meanys of lyvyng  
by ocupacion of youre rehersed pore besechers the kyngis trewe liege people and subgettys  
And they shall praye almyghty god for the weele of youre right noble astate.



A.5.3 Partial summary of confiscations in England. Undated. [ca. August-October 1468]  
HA Köln Hanse IV 68/63v.

This be the names of every towne where the esterlings hath  
any goodz and the Retourne acordynge at folowith

Furst in London	M viii <sup>c</sup> lxxxvii li. xvii s. vii d. ob.
Yorcke	xiii li. vi s. viii d.
Newcastell	lvi li.
Hull	cc lxxiiii li. xix s. x d.
Boston	cc iiii <sup>xx</sup> xvii li. xvii s. [v d.]
Cambruge	xxviii li. xvii s. iii d. ob.
Lynne	iii <sup>c</sup> iiii <sup>xx</sup> li. vii s. i d. ob.
Bramidon'Ferei	xxxiiii li.
Ypeswich	xxiiii li. viii s.
Colchester	lxx li. xiii s. vi d.
Braybruke	xviii li.

Some to all the Retournes by certificattz  
M M M D liiii li. xvii s. ob.

Some to all off the Schyppz and goudz that the merchants englisshe complenisth of is  
xii<sup>m</sup> D cvi li. ii s. iiiii d.

For my lord part of northumbrlond	
in the first for his good Shippe the valentyne	Dc li.
for his freeht	ccc li.
for his merchandise	cxl li. vi s. vi d.
for his damaige	xiiii li.
Some of my lord part	M liii li. vi s. xi d.

A.5.4 Copy of an order authorizing the release of cloths belonging to Cologne merchants. Undated. [ca. August-October 1468?] HA Köln Hanse III K 15/62.

Ryght worshipfull and welbelovyd in god etc. I rekommend me unto you And where as xxxi Byles of cloth belongyng to certayn merchauntez of Coleyn whiche ben in your kepyng were of late for certayn causes by the kynges comaundment restreynd and the seid merchauntez put from the libertee of theym it ys so that the kyng by thadvyse of his counsell hath deuly herd and excused the causez and mater of the seid restreynt wheryn noo defaute is founde in the seid merchauntez nor merchaundisez Wherfor he woll that the seid merchauntez have delyveraunce of the seid cloth to conveye and dispose it at their wille any comaundement to the contrare not withstonding Wherfor y wills you in the kynges name that you delyvere or make to be delyvered unto the seid merchauntez their factors or attorneys in this behalfe the seid Byles and every percell theroff beyng in your kepyng any cause you movyng the contrarie notwithstanding. geven at London.

And this our writing shalbe to you at alle  
[...] sufficient warrant and discharge

[verso] To Gerard Wesell att Stileyerd  
To the aldyrman of the Stelyarde in London this be delivered

[left margin] hyer affter folowyn the names off the merchants off almayne whiche desiron  
to selle [...] off ther goddes and merchandise for to paye ther freght and  
expenc'

Jesus

Arnold Wynkensson xxxiiii balles off madder vi packs off lynecloth vii rolles off  
boultcloth iii pec' off wex x sacs off lycmos ffor ffreght preuiage loidmanage licht'age  
kraneage and portorage sauff the Kynges custome xv li.  
Item ffor expenc' for hem and hys two men from the xxix day of August last past tel the  
octava off michelmas next comyng summa xviii li.

Summa totalis xxxiii li.

Gerard Wesel for John Farnham iii packs and i ffardel of lynecloth ffor freght puiage  
loidmanage [lichtage] kranage and portage sauff the Kynges custome iii li. x s.  
Item ffor expenc' ffor hem and the servant of the place the tyme afforsaid xvi li.

Summa xx li. x s.

Herry Houwyser and John Ruschendorp the servans of Herman Ryng merchans of coleyn ffor ix  
barells styel xi balles of madder i pipe woode i straw wex for uncostes as is afforsaid  
vii li.

Item for the expenc' off the said Herry and John xii li.

Summa totalis xix li.

Matheu van der Schuren for hem and John van A ii packs and ii ffardels with lyncloth xii  
sacs of [heupp] ii last off soope ii pypes ii bales of madder and a pack off colleyn  
threede vi li. xii s.

Item for expenc' off the said Matheu Peter Berlynhusen and Derik Boule servant to  
John van A merchans off coleyn xviii li.

Summa totalis xxiiii li. xii s.

Arnold Seller for i pack colenthred and i fardel x s. Item for hys costes vi li.

Summa vi li. x s.

Herry Foget for expenc' vi li.

Herry Rutko and Gerard van Grove for ther expenc' xii li.

John Warenthorp i ffat of peltrye ii packs ii rolles and i basket off lynecloth and iii  
bales of madder v li.

Item ffor hem and Bernard Warenthorp and ii men expenc' xx li.

Summa xxv li.

Jorge Tacke vi bales off madder iii [...] oyle i pack and i fardel off lynecloth iii  
barell soope v li. x s.

Item ffor expenc' ffor hem and hys man xii li.

Summa xvii li x s.

Reynold Lobbrech and Peter Sledelman ix barell styel vi balles mader iii bales fustain  
iiii li. xii s.

Item ffor hys expenc' vi li.

Summa x li. xii s.

John Stockem and John Berchem ffor vi packs off coleyn threde ii li.

Item ffor hys expenc' vi li.

Summa ix li.

Herman Slotke ffor expenc' vi li.

John Barenbrouk for expenc' vi li.

William Schaphusen for expenc' vi li.

Johan Langeman ffor xxi fat and di of styel ix li. xviii s. Item for expenc' vi s.

Summa xv li. xviii s.



Arnold Moldick ffor iii packs and i fardel off lynecloth i pack coleynthred ii last and vii barells off soope iii li.

Item ffor expenc' vi li.

Summa x li.

Richard van Alffter the servand of John van Dorn merchand of coleyn viii packs off coleynthrede v balle off madder ii tonne off olye v li.

Item for hys expenc' vi li.

Summa xi li.

Herry Breckerfeld ffor i pack off lynecloth iii sacks off [...] vi sacs of fedders iii li. x s.

Item ffor hys expenc' vi li.

Summa ix li. x s.

Reynold Kerchhord for i pack lynecloth and xii barells off potasches for uncostes and werpyng in the see ii li. x s.

Item ffor expenc' for hem and hys man xii li.

Summa xiiii li. x s.

Albrecht Gyse for iii last and vii barells of tran v lastes and x fat asches iii last and di terr i last off byer and ii<sup>c</sup> waynscotte ffor uncostes and werpyng in the see xvii li. x s.

Item ffor expenc' for hym and hys man xii li.

Summa xxix li. x s.

Albrecht Valant vii packs off flax i pack of lynecloth i straw off wex a half a last off trane for uncostes and werping in the see vii li.

Item ffor hys expenc' vi li.

Summa xiii li.

Lenard Amelong v packs off flax ffor uncostes and werpyng in the see xii li.

Item for expenc' vi li.

Summa xvii li.

Mateus [Katto] iiii packs off flex ffor uncostes and castyng in the see vii li.

Item for expenc' vi li.

Summa xiii li.

[Urgh'] Swartewolt ii<sup>c</sup> waynscotte ii last and di off terr and i last off asches for uncostes and castyng in the see vii li. iiii s.

Item for expenc' vi li.

Summa xiii li. iiii s.

Nicolas Steffan ii<sup>c</sup> off waynscotte ii last off terr and ii lastes of asche ferr uncostes and castyng in the see vi li. viii s.

Item for expenc' vi li.

Summa xiii li. viii s.

\* On 20th September 1468 Edward IV granted the Hanseatic merchants permisson to sell off goods to the value of 2,000 marks. HUB. IX no. 509. However, the arrested merchants subsequently complained that the mayor of London and "his Bretherne" restrained them from selling "what goodes ...necessary...for their expenses and other necessaries". HA Köln Hanse III K 15/100.

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### Abbreviations

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- Akten. : Akten der Ständetage Preussens unter der Herrschaft des Deutschen Ordens.
- ARA. : Algemeen Rijksarchief.
- BL. : British Library.
- H.A. Poelman, Bronnen. : Bronnen tot de geschiedenis van den Oostzeehandel.
- H.J. Smit, Bronnen. : Bronnen tot de geschiedenis van den Handel met England, Scotland en Ierland.
- W.S. Unger, Bronnen. : Bronnen tot de geschiedenis van Middelburg in den Landesheerlichen Tijd.
- Z.W. Sneller & W.S. Unger, Bronnen. : Bronnen tot de geschiedenis van den Handel met Frankrijk.
- CChR. : Calendar of Charter Rolls.
- CCR. : Calendar of the Close Rolls.
- CLB. : Calendar of Letter Books of the City of London.
- CLRO. : Corporation of London Record Office.
- CPMR. : Calendar of Plea and Memoranda Rolls of the City of London.
- CPR. : Calendar of the Patent Rolls.
- G. Asaert, Documenten. : Documenten voor de Geschiedenis van de Antwerpse Scheepvaart.
- ECHR. : Economic History Review.
- R. Doehaerd, Etudes. : Etudes Anversoises : Documents sur le commerce international à Anvers 1488-1514.
- Foedera. : Foedera, conventiones, literae, etc.
- HA Köln : Historisches Archiv der Stadt Köln.
- HGBll. : Hansische Geschichtsblätter.
- HR. : Hanserecesse.
- HUB. : Hansisches Urkundenbuch.
- W.S. Unger, Iersekeroord. : De tol van Iersekeroord.
- LUB. : Codex Diplomaticus Lubecensis.
- PRO. : Public Record Office.
- B. Kuske, Quellen. : Quellen zur Geschichte des Kölner Handels und Verkehrs im Mittelalter.
- Rot. Parl. : Rotuli Parliamentorum.
- SAA. : Stadsarchief Antwerpen.
- StA Hamburg : Staatsarchiv Hamburg.
- StA Lübeck : Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck.
- Studies. : Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century.
- WAPG. : Archiwum Panstwowe w Gdansku.



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